GMA defends presence of US troops in South

METRO / A25
Hayden Kho suspended by PMA for 1 year

METRO / A26
Chavit told: Infidelity no excuse to beat up partner

BUSINESS / B1
Gov't sets sale of P25B in retail bonds

SPORTS / A23
Tipon rises, Ladon sinks in World Amateur boxing

WORLD / A29
46 dead, dozens missing in Indon quake

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, September 4, 2009 ★ 9 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 268 P18

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESterday defended the presence of US troops in Mindanao, saying they were helping the Armed Forces of the Philippines "in so many ways" without participating in direct combat.

"While Americans cannot fight on the ground, they've been helping us in so many ways," Ms Arroyo said in a speech during the Filipino World War II Veterans' Assembly at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City.

GMA DEFENDS A10

Japan's first lady: I met Tom Cruise in previous life

TOKYO—JAPAN'S next prime minister might be nicknamed "the alien," but it's his soon-to-be first lady who claims to have had a close encounter with another world.

JAPAN'S A11

6 tagged in Dacer killing

Mancao accuses Estrada of lying

By Tina G. Santos and Jeannette I. Andrade

DEPOSED PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino were yesterday named in court by former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao as among those behind "Operation Delta," the purported plan to kill publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer.

Mancao also named the late Supt. Teodilo Viña, former Supt. Glenn Dumlao, and former Chief Insp. Vicente Arnado as directly involved in the operation, according to Mancao's lawyer Ferdinand Topacio.

The former police officials were members of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), which Lacson once headed and of which Mancao was a ranking officer.

"Mancao studied today his direct testimony," Topacio told reporters after the hearing.

5 ENDORSED A19

LACSON: Either Mancao deliberately lied under oath or he didn't know what he was talking about in court. I am sorry for him.

ESTRADA: I don't want to dignify that. It's a waste of time.

MANCAO: They've been. They've now where they are because of our efforts. It's an outlook.

THE WITNESSES

WILLIE CABUGUIN

ALEX DELOY

WILLIAM LOPEZ

PHOTOS BY ROY DOMINGO

Palace condemns killing of Dacer witness

By TJ Burgonio

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY condemned the killing of a witness in the November 2000 murders of Salvador Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito, saying it was the latest in "a serial crime wave that has already claimed the lives of so many alleged conspirators" in the case.

Undersecretary Anthony Golez told reporters at a briefing that President Macapagal-Arroyo was expecting the Philippine National Police to "immediately" solve the Wednesday killing of witness Jimmy Lopez and to determine whether it was related to the Dacer-Corbito case.

"It's probable because it's a well-celebrated case," Golez said when asked if Lopez's killing was connected to the twin murders. "But of course we have to check other angles regarding this."

Lopez, one of the new witnesses presented by Dacer's daughters in their complaint against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, was shot dead in his rented house in Cavite, a province south of Manila, early on Wednesday.

He was to have testified yes-

PALACE A19

Ruling party faces threats of desertion

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE ADMINISTRATION'S Lakas-Kampi-CMD party better keep its promise of choosing a standard-bearer this month, as some members are considering transferring to other groups if its path remains unclear, according to two party members.

"Well, the party still plays an important role but we're running out of time. They have to make a decision sooner or later because we have to make our own decisions also," Zambales Rep. Ma. Milagros "Mitzi" Magsaysay said.

Magsaysay said the party should decide on its presidential and vice presidential candidates and its senatorial slate for the May 2010 elections, so that she and other members could begin promoting them to boost their ratings.

"If you were in the party, you'd rather want to know which direction the boat is tak-

RULING A21

OPPOSITION UNITY

Panlilio, Padaca to back Aquino bid

THE OPPOSITION WAS IN A flux yesterday.

Two reform-minded presidential aspirants—Governor Ed Panlilio of Pampanga and Grace Padaca of Isabela—have decided to withdraw from the May elections and support Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino II, the Inquirer learned yesterday.

They are scheduled to announce today their decision "for the sake of unity" after Sen. Mar Roxas, the Liberal Party president, decided on Tuesday to step aside in favor of Aquino, who has gone on a spiritual retreat to seek "divine guidance" and ponder his next move.

But evangelist Eddie Villanueva, leader of the Jesus is Lord Movement and the political party Bangon Pilipinas, said in a statement yesterday that he was pursuing his presidential plans.

"The only way to achieve Bangon Pilipinas' vision of a new Philippines and platform of righteous governance is to stay in the race," said Villanueva, who was nominated his party's standard-bearer on Aug. 21.

"A bigger and more crucial question confronting the entire nation ... is whether we are willing to change, to go back to God's values," said Villanueva, who is making his second bid for the highest post in the land.

The Nacionalista Party has likewise announced that its standard-bearer, Sen. Manny

PARTIDO A21

Palace brands Noynoy retreat as 'gimmicky'

By Christian V. Esguerra

MALACAÑANG IS MINIMIZING POlitical "gimmicks" in Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III's so-called spiritual retreat before he decides on whether to run for president next year.

Gary Olivar, deputy presidential spokesperson, yesterday said the senator should "not just rely on sentimental support" in heeding the supposed clamor for him to seek the highest office in the land.

"We suspect whatever gimmickry, whatever ways on how he can arrive at a decision," Ambassador Golez, another spokesperson, said in a media briefing.

Golez was commenting on impressions that Aquino might only be playing hard-to-get before eventually announcing his

PALACE A21

President declares period of national prayer

EDUARDO MANALO: Reported successor of his father Kia Ertly as leader of the Iglesia ni Cristo.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo has issued a proclamation declaring a period of national prayer for Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) leader Eraño "Kia Erdy" Manalo, who died Monday at age 84.

Ms Arroyo mourned in the INC Central Temple on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City to pay her last respects to the late INC executive minister after arriving from Libya at around 8 p.m. Wednesday.

She condoled with Manalo's son and successor Eduardo Manalo, Malacañang said.

While at the Central Temple, Ms Arroyo issued Proclamation No. 1674 declaring a period of

PRESIDENT A18

MEMBERS of the Iglesia ni Cristo flock to the main church in Quezon City where the body of their leader lies on Sept. 3, 2009. Manalo passed away early this week due to cardiac arrest at the age of 84.

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/49 20 2 18 9 15 13

SUERTRES 6 5 9 SIX DIGIT 2 9 0 4 7 1

SUPERLOTTO 6/49 7 5 7 1 3 13 24 45 42 P16,000,000.00

Probe of Villar losing steam

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE SENATE INVESTIGATION INTO ALLEGATIONS that Sen. Manuel Villar's real estate empire had benefited from the alleged double funding and diversion of the C-5 road extension project is apparently losing steam.

Only three senators of the 23-member upper chamber showed up at the start of yesterday's hearing of the Senate committee of the whole—Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, Panfilo Lacson and Rodolfo Biazon.

Senators Gregorio Honasan, Jamby Madrigal, the main accuser, and Richard Gordon turned up late.

The object of the investigation, Villar, who was ousted as Senate President in a coup in November 2008, was a no-show. He is now part of the six-member minority bloc.

Villar, a presidential aspirant, has declined to participate in the investigation, saying the "odds are stacked" against him.

As yesterday's hearing, Madrigal's counsel, Ernesto Francisco, moved to have Assistants Administrator, a consultant for a Villar company cited for contempt and arrested for failing to show up at the hearing.

Adriano's lawyer, Gabriel Bautista, offered to "summon position witnesses" for advising his client not to appear before the committee on what senators said was a flimsy excuse that the subpoena had been served at the wrong address.

"The fact that you're here and your service was engaged by Adriano proves that he received the subpoena. So how is it possible that he failed to receive it?" Lacson told Enriquez.

Enriquez asked for a deferment of Adriano's appearance "based on reasonable ground that Mr. (Adriano's) presence may be excused considering that we have not yet organized ourselves and prepared ourselves to prepare (for his defense)."

The senators rebuked after Enriquez promised to ensure Adriano's appearance before an adjudicatory hearing set for Sept. 8.

Enrile said the contempt order of the whole was "showing leniency" in deferring action on the motion to cite Adriano in contempt.

He again urged Villar to participate in the process so that the case could be disposed of as quickly as possible.

He said Villar's statements defending his position that were made outside the committee of the whole could not be considered part of the official records of the case.

During the hearing, Rolando Dobles, director general of the Senate legislative budget research and monitoring office, was questioned by Francisco.

Francisco presented to the committee a picture of Adriano, an officer of Subtle Properties.

Dobles confirmed that the man in the picture was the same person she had met at Villar's office and who had dictated to her Villar's proposed amendments to the 2008 budget.

Francisco presented two certifications, both of which asserted that Adriano was neither a member of Villar's Senate staff

Economist tells Palace: Don't scrimp on infra

By Lala B. Salaverria

FORMER BUDGET SECRETARY BENJAMIN Diokno believes the government should spend more for infrastructure next year, putting him essentially in opposition with a lawmaker who says the administration should not cut capital outlay.

Diokno, now an economist professor at the University of the Philippines, warned that otherwise the economy could backslide sooner.

He considered it the administration was pulling back infrastructure spending too early.

"If so, it could be a serious miscalculation. With the economy still wobbly, mainly aided by higher public sector spending, it could easily tumble again as the stabilizing effects of election spending and weak fiscal stimulus fade," Diokno said in a statement he issued at the Ateneo media forum yesterday in Quezon City.

Too early

"I would like to argue that it is too early to pull the plug on public infrastructure spending. The economy does not have sturdy legs to stand on, as I have said before," he said.

He also said the 2010 national budget was contractionary and the next administration may be saddled with a weak budget.

He said public infrastructure spending, which he described as a vital component of the post-recovery strategy, would contract by 26.9 percent.

At the House of Representatives on Wednesday, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said the proposed outlay in 2010.

Gox, chair of the appropriations committee which held a hearing with the administration's finance officials, said spending for infrastructure should not be drastically reduced this year vital to creating investment and strengthening social areas.

He also said the incoming administration next year should be "provided some level of comfort insofar as spending for capital investment is concerned."

But the finance officials maintained that things would be different in 2010 because the private sector could be counted on to help the government since many economies would be recovering from the global financial crisis.

More prudent

They also said it was more prudent not to spend too much and get the country deeper in debt.

Diokno, meanwhile, noted inconsistencies in the official 2010 budget document and President Arroyo's budget message that also listed statistics and figures.

He said the President's budget message stated that the 2010 capital outlay was P233.45 billion or 2.6 percent of the Gross Development Product, and was 15.3 percent of the budget. It said P161.3 billion would go to infrastructure.

But Table 1 of the Budget of Expenditures and Sources of Financing shows the 2010 capital outlay at P220.9 billion, with public infrastructure spending amounting to P137.9 billion, Diokno pointed out.

"These discrepancies have to be explained," he said. "Maybe they should send an emissary to Congress."

'Labuyo' gathering steam

By Alcuin Papa

TROPICAL CYCLONE "LABUYO" INTENsified into a tropical storm yesterday as it moved closer to northwest northern Luzon.

On its way to Japan's Ryukyu Islands, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said it turned "Labuyo" 560 kilometers east of Tuguegarao City.

The storm was packing maximum winds of 65 kilometers per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 80 kilometers per hour. It was moving west at seven kilometers per hour.

Pagasa said it expected "Labuyo," the 12th tropical cyclone to enter the country this year, to be 550 kilometers east northeast of Tuguegarao by Friday morning.

By Saturday morning, the storm is expected to be 400 kilometers east southeast of Basco, Batanes.

Pagasa did not raise a public storm warning, however.

"Labuyo" was expected to enhance the southwest monsoon and bring occasional to frequent rains over Metro Manila, the western section of southern Luzon and the Visayas.

The rest of Luzon will have cloudy skies with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will be mostly cloudy with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms, it said.

Fishing boats and other small sea craft were advised not to venture out while larger vessels were warned against big waves.

9 Filipinas nabbed in HK sex gang bust

HONG KONG—POLICE HAVE smashed a vice syndicate suspected of trafficking women from the Philippines and luring them into prostitution in Hong Kong, officials said on Thursday.

Officers arrested nine Filipinas in a early morning raid in the downtown's Wan Chai red light district, according to a police statement.

Undercover officers mounted operation "Stonehaven" at the end of August to identify the gang's leaders who were suspected of recruiting women who had originally come to Hong Kong to work as domestic helpers.

They raided a private club in Wan Chai and a nearby flat on Thursday morning, arresting four Filipina aged between 26 and 47 for trafficking women in Hong Kong for sexual purposes and for managing a vice establishment.

Five other Filipinas, aged between 24 and 29, suspected of working in the club were also arrested for breaching their conditions of stay.

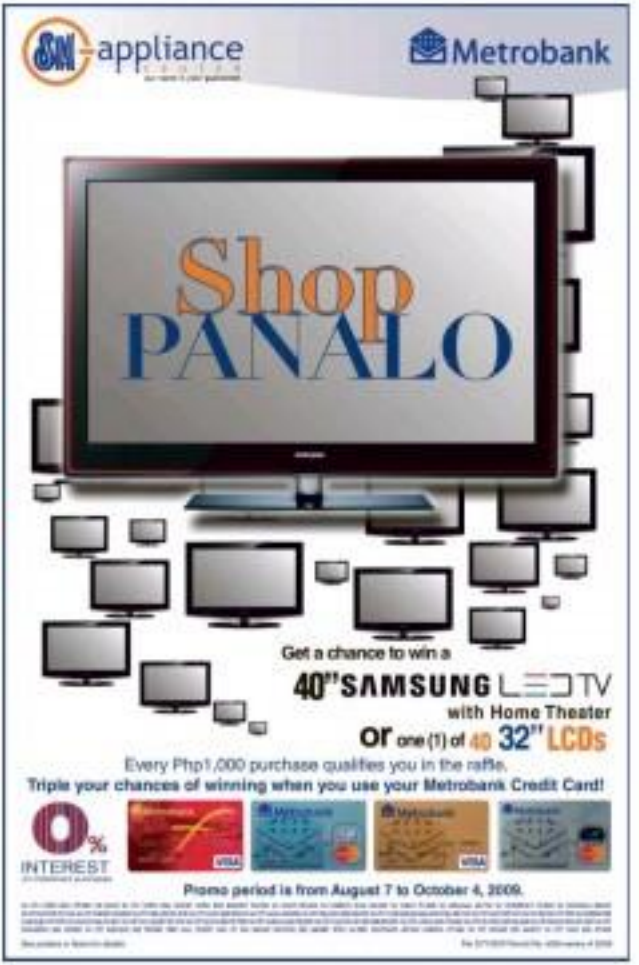
All the women are being questioned in police custody.

Under Hong Kong law, prostitution is legal if carried out by one woman operating alone.

Many of Hong Kong's sex workers are sex workers from Southeast Asia and mainland China who enter the territory on tourist visas in the hope of making some money.

Official figures show there were four cases of human trafficking in Hong Kong in 2007 and one last year. Police said there was no evidence that the city had a human trafficking problem.

"But we will continue to be vigilant and maintain close liaison with foreign consulates and other law enforcement agencies both in Hong Kong and overseas to tackle such illegal activities," a police spokesman said. AFP



OUTSTANDING TEACHERS

President Macapagal-Arroyo and Manobanis's George SC Ty pose with this year's Manobook Foundation outstanding teachers during yesterday's awards ceremonies in Malacañang. They are (from left) Zeila Pinongcos, Ms. Perla Ramoldo, Rachelle Papsin, Sheria Faith Garcia, Dina Joana Ocampo, Ramon del Fierro, Lourdes Meran, Gemma Cortez, Eva Intogan and Benjamin Martinez. (MALACAÑANG)

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No leads on indie film buffs' killings

By Nancy C. Carvajal

POLICE STILL HAVE NO LEADS on the suspects in the robbery-killing of a Filipino-Canadian and his Slovenian partner but found a motorcycle and an itinerant junk dealer who may have helped the mad believed to abscond with the suspects got hired by the couple.

Alexis Tiamzon, 29, and Mike Beltran, 36, both film critics and fans of Philippine independent cinema, were shot dead Tuesday night after they arrived home in condo during the course of transacting their residence at 39 Times St., Barangay West Triangle, Quezon City.

Police believe a new homemaid, Cristella Gracias Bayaka, had let the robbers into the house.

Chief Insp. Benjamin Ebuen, head of the Quezon City Police District homicide investigation unit, said the maid may have used a fictitious name as there was no derogatory record of her with police.

Ebuenzo said police learned the maid had befriended a "manicurist and a neighbor" to help her get a job with the couple.

"We are still working on the identities of the robbers, but we discovered that Dayag befriended a manicurist who had rich clients and a 'neighbor' who went around the neighborhood buying bottles from stalls of sidewalkers," Ebuenzo said.

He said he was withholding the names of the manicurist and junk dealer for security reasons.

He said they were found through the scene-of-the-crime video the applied for a police clearance before being hired by Tiamzon and Beltran.

"We found out the maid also used their address to acquire insurance and police clearances," Ebuenzo said.

He said investigators showed the maid's cut a part of a robbery gang targeting affluent households.

"She would only stay for a few months as maid then move on to other employers until she found the right target," Ebuenzo said.

Jennie Sugo, Gresanto Bayaka said police were checking if other homes and establishments in the victims' neighborhood were equipped with closed-circuit television cameras.

After robbing and killing the victims, the robbers made off with their car which they abandoned a few blocks away.

"We are calling on homeowners and managers with CCTVs if they have footage of the suspects," Rosales said.

Ebuenzo said a representative of the victims' families contacted police to say they were arriving in the country today.

"We will provide them with a progress report and autopsies if they ask for it," Ebuenzo said.

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Correction

IN THE SEPT. 2 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Imelda pines for lost power, wants son to seek presidency"—misstated the date when the distaste Ferdinand Marcos passed away. Marcos died on Sept. 28, 1989—not Sept. 21, 1989.

* * *

Reader's may send their requests for out-of-town obituaries to us by fax at the Fax Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor, Inquirer Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-Sta. Mesa, Makati City. Fax No. 896-7-69-99; e-mail address: deskmail@inquirer.com.ph.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, September 4, 1989
Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Col 1:15-20
Gospel: Lk 5:33-39

The scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus, "The disciples of John fast often and say long prayers, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees. Why is it that your disciples eat and drink?" Then Jesus said to them, "You can't make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them. But later the bridegroom will be taken from them and they will fast in those days."

Jesus also told them this parable, "No one sews a piece from a new coat to put it on an old coat; otherwise the new coat will be torn and the piece from the new will not match the old. No one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed as well. But new wine must be put into new skins. No one who has tasted old wine is eager to get new wine, but says, 'The old is good.'"

Commentary:

Now we can see in hope. We need to faith, walk in love, and see in hope. We know that this life is not all there is, that one day we will experience eternal life in all its fullness. This is the hope of every Christian. The philosophy of our world is instant gratification. Buy now, pay later. We are not accustomed to hope for anything. And so sometimes don't seem to wait for anything. But our hope of heaven enables us to endure anything, because we know that nothing will be able to keep us from our eternal home.

Hope makes us willing to endure, even sacrifice for future glory. Hope allows us to rest in God's promises. We don't focus enough on hope. We don't focus enough on heaven. If you are who perspective is live to the here and now, it enables us to recognize what is really important and eternal and what is temporary and fleeting. Christ changes us so that we become useful instruments in His hands. We become representatives of the power of God to transform a human life, representatives of our faith in Christ, our love for our neighbor and our hope in God's eternal light.

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No funds for more poor families, says DSWD

By Nikko Dizon

IT'S AN ORDER well-meant but lacking in funds.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in a statement, said that it could not yet accommodate the 380,000 additional families Overdrive Macapagal-Arroyo ordered included in a government poverty-reduction program by next year.

The DSWD said it would need P5 billion more for the 380,000 households under the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program to 4Ps by 2010.

Secretary Esperanza Cabral disclosed that many poor families are requesting to be included in the 4Ps, the country's conditional cash transfer program, but currently the funds can accommodate 700,000 beneficiaries," the statement said.

Following a cabinet retreat in Baguio in June, President Arroyo ordered the number of 4Ps beneficiaries increased from 700,000 to one million.

The program has a budget of P5 billion for 700,000 families.

"We thank President Arroyo for supporting the budget request for the 4Ps. The president continues to look for more funds to expand the program," Cabral said in the statement.

The 4Ps was patterned after Latin American conditional cash transfer programs, the biggest of which is Brazil's Bolsa Familia.

"The Philippines' 4Ps is described as a "social development and poverty reduction initiative."

It provides cash grants of up to P1,400 a month to poor households for health, nutrition and education needs, particularly for those with children up to 14 years, pregnant mothers and their kids who avail themselves of the social services program of the government.

As present, 4Ps covers 295 municipalities and 15 cities in 17 regions of the country.

Cabral said 4Ps will be expanded to provinces and cities "with large pockets of poverty that were not previously included as target beneficiaries."

She said more local government executives had been asking the DSWD to include their areas in the program.

More war vets seek US payment

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NUMBER OF FILIPINO war veterans seeking a piece of the $198-million lump sum payment from the United States has ballooned to more than 31,000—almost double than the expected 18,000 claims.

Despite the numbers, Presidency Undersecretary Antonio Arenas yesterday encouraged other veterans to continue filing their claims.

Feb. 14 deadline

"We must beat the Feb. 15 deadline next year for the filing of all claims," he said in a speech during the Filipino World War II Veterans Assembly in Camp Aguinaldo.

Mr. Arroyo said she was assured by the US Secretary Administration that it would speed up the processing of claims, with no less than USVA chief Eric Shinseki saying his office was ready to add more personnel to attend to the applications.

The President also announced that the government was now working to extend another benefit called "total administrative liabilities" to the veterans.

She said this was contained in what she called "unfunded legislation" in the past. The government would start with the payment vouchers next September to get her 2010 ...

Mr. Arroyo said the government had previously set aside the old age pension benefits of veterans worth P7 billion.

"I am honored that it's under our administration that veterans of World War II, as well as of other wars, finally received old age pensions that were not paid by previous administrations," she said.

Immigration bureau is 69

THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION CELebrates its 69th anniversary today with a series of activities to be capped by a visit by President Macapagal-Arroyo who will unveil the marker and inspect the bureau's newly-renovated building in Intramuros.

Deputy commissioner Roy Almoro said today's celebration will kick off with the conferment of awards and recognition by acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera to the bureau's outstanding employees.

Almoro said the celebrations will center on the reforms that were introduced and initiated by Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan, who assumed office two years ago.

Conference

On Monday, Libanan will preside over an annual conference of all the bureau's alien control officers and the newly designated immigration area directors in the different regions nationwide.

During the meeting, the directors and control officers are expected to submit their accomplishment reports and their recommendations and feedback on the regionalization scheme that was recently implemented by Libanan.

The regionalization program, according to the bureau's press statement, is one of Libanan's centerpiece programs as it aims "to bring the basic services more accessible to foreigners in the provinces through the establishment of regional immigration centers headed by the most qualified and competent area directors."

Sixth-graders performing better in achievement test

By Philip C. Tubeza

PRECIOUS IVY BANGIS: Topnotcher

THE PERFORMANCE OF SIXTH-GRADE elementary school pupils in the National Achievement Test has continued to improve for the third straight year, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said yesterday.

Lapus said the increase of 23.26 percent in the pupils' test scores from 2006 to 2009 indicated a steady improvement of elementary school education in the country.

"The investments are poured into improving learning outcomes are now giving dividends," Lapus said in a statement.

Lapus said the 2009 NAT showed a marked improvement in the mean percentage score (MPS) of 66.16 from 54.66 in 2006, or an improvement of 11.67 points or 21.36 percent.

There was also improvement, for the same 2006 to 2009 period, in Math scores (by 26.82 percent), English (14.97 percent), Filipino (7.8 percent), Hekasi (10.71 percent) and Science (27.30 percent).

However, scores for Filipino dropped on a year-on-year basis from 73.18 points in 2008 to 71.21 this year.

Fruit of hard work

Lapus gave awards to the pupils, schools, divisions and regions which performed well in the exams this year, which were scheduled in the bonus biotech in Quezon City.

"The improvements we see in the performance of our students are the fruits of the commitment and hard work of all stakeholders in education...the whole DepEd family, the community and the private sector," Lapus said.

The NAT is an annual examinations administered to public and private school students throughout the country to determine their achievement level, strengths and weaknesses in key subject areas. It covers English, Science, Math, Filipino and Makabayan (geography, history and civics) with 40 test items each for a total of 200 test items.

About 1.76 million pupils from 31,196 public and 2,366 private elementary school nationwide took the test this year.

Precious Ivy Q. Bangis, a 13-year-old student from Silang, Cavite, was the overall topnotcher this year with a score of 95.5 percent.

In the medium-sized division level, students from Bataan province got the highest scores in all five subjects.

Lapus said the scores have improved because for the past four years the DepEd has placed more resources into human resource development, especially in teacher training programs.

He said the DepEd has also launched intervention programs aimed at improving key performance indicators in basic education.

Reader program

These include the Every Child a Reader Program, emphasizing teacher training in the teaching of English, priority in teaching Math, Science and English major, providing one book for every student in core subjects, and Intel for school.

DepEd also created the Project TUNE (Turning Around Low Performance in English), focused on assisting the low-performing schools with more textbooks, instructional materials and pedagogical strategies, Lapus said.

Lapus said the DepEd's intensified partnership with the private sector through the Adopt-A-School program also contributed to higher achievement levels.

About P12 billion worth of private sector assistance has been entered through the Adopt-A-School program since the latest was re-launched in 2006, he said.

Lubos ang aming pakikiramay sa pagdadalamhati sa pamilya ni Ka Erdy at sa buong kapatiran ng Iglesia ni Cristo. Maraming salamat sa iyong tapat na paglilingkod. Mananatili ka sa aming puso.

Eraño "Ka Erdy" G. Manalo

January 2, 1925 - August 31, 2009

Congressman Rody at Mari Antonino at Pamilya
Mamamayan at Tagapaglingkod ng Fourth District ng Nueva Ecija

Delgado heirs appeal SC ruling on Gonzalez

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE FAMILY OF SLAIN BUSINESSMAN Felixberto Delgado has appealed a Supreme Court decision dismissing the murder case against Delgado's stepbrother, Isidro Gonzalez, a grandson of the late President Elpidio Quirino and ex-husband of singer Kuh Ledesma.

In a motion filed with the high court's 1st Division, Delgado's heirs asked for a reconsideration of the court's Aug. 7, 2009, ruling upholding a Court of Appeals decision clearing Gonzalez and his driver, Romulo Bautista, of involvement in Delgado's murder.

The Supreme Court ruled that Delgado's heirs had no legal standing to file the petition for review against the Court of Appeals' decision because only the Solicitor General may represent the state in the appeal of a criminal case while private complainants may appeal only the civil aspect of the case.

On its merits

The high court pointed out that the failure of Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera, who is also acting justice secretary, to appeal the appellate court's ruling dealt a blow to the prosecution's case.

Represented by lawyer Gabriel Bautista, the Delgado heirs asked the high court to allow the case against Gonzalez to be tried on its merits and not be dismissed because of a technicality.

They insisted that the case falls under an exception, stating that a private complainant in a criminal case may file a petition directly with the court "when there is a denial of due process to the prosecution and the state or its agents refuse to act on the case to the prejudice of the private offended party."

The Delgado heirs said they were first denied due process when the acting city prosecutor of Manila ruled that there was no sufficient evidence that Gonzalez and Bautista were the ones who robbed Delgado to death and smashed his girlfriend, Annalisa Dreary, at his residence in the Bayflower Building in Malate, Manila, on March 11, 2007.

Acting on an appeal by the Delgado family, Devanadera reversed the city prosecutor's ruling and ordered charges filed against Gonzalez and Bautista.

The Delgado heirs said they were denied due process for the second time when the Court of Appeals rescinded its decision and acquitted Gonzalez without a full-blown trial.

They said there was denial of due process when the appellate court ordered the dismissal of the charges filed in court and quashed the arrest warrants against Gonzalez and Bautista.

Group protests freeze in maids' wages in HK

By Jerome Aning

AN ORGANIZATION OF ASIAN MIGRANT labor organizations yesterday denounced a Hong Kong government decision to freeze foreign domestic workers' monthly wages at the current HK$3,580 (about P21,580) level.

The Hong Kong-based Asian Migrants Coordinating Body, which includes seven Filipino workers' groups, described the freezing of the minimum allowable wage (MAW) as a blow to domestic helpers and their families suffering from the hard economic times back home.

"Wage freeze is definitely not what foreign domestics want in this time of crisis. Considering the impact of the economic crunch on us and on our families, who can survive with a wage level that is even way below that of a decent one?" ACMB spokesperson Eni Lestari said in a statement from Hong Kong.

Lestari said that since the "drastic" HK$400 wage cut in 2003, foreign maids have been demanding for a significant wage increase.

Pittance is nothing

What was cut out in 2003 has not been fully recovered since the Hong Kong government has only increased the maids' wages by HK$400, spread out in yearly increments until 2008.

"Before, they gave us a yearly pittance. Now with the wage freeze, they totally dismiss any presence of pressing what is right and just for foreign domestics," she lamented.

With the wage freeze order came a directive pegging the minimum food allowance for foreign maids at HK$947 (about P4,000).

But the ACMB said the amount, though "long overdue" and a welcome improvement for those receiving such an entitlement, was still not enough for the maids' everyday food needs.

"The amount only translates to about HK$25 [P107] per day, barely enough to buy a value meal at McDonald's! Nobody here can really survive with such an amount," Lestari said.

She noted that the food allowance was not part of the wage that foreign maids wanted increased.

"Now, the Hong Kong government has admitted that the majority of employers provide food for their foreign maids because they are 'law to' employers. If the government thinks that we will be opposed by this segregating of their essential decision to keep the current unjust wage level, they are badly mistaken," she said.

Lestari said that ACMB and its affiliate migrant groups would stage a protest on Sunday to denounce the wage freeze decision.

She said that ACMB would continue its lobby for the inclusion of foreign domestics in the statutory minimum wage (SMW) coverage in time for the opening of the Hong Kong Legislative Council next month.

"The arbitrary, unjust and unsurprised listing of the MAW is the very reason why we want to be part of the SMW. The HK government is again rebuffing all their bodyguards' justifications for their decision after a deliberation process that only they know about," Lestari said.

She said there was something fundamentally wrong with the MAW policy and it has to end.

"With the SMW, [foreign domestics] will be given more opportunity to lobby for our wages, free from the whims of the Hong Kong government," Lestari said.

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Mar defends Korina, decries 'foul' characterization: I love her

MRS. MAR ROXAS with Iris Rauncer, Korina Sanchez: She's a loving, brave, intelligent...person.

SEN. MANUEL "MAR" ROXAS II yesterday took exception to a caustic remark by the Inquirer which referred to Ms. Sanchez, ABS-CBN broadcaster Korina Sanchez, as the latter "Miss Pulongbalo."

The story dealt with Sanchez's criticism of Roxas' perceived demeanor, including Inquirer columnist Conrado de Quiros.

In a text message, Roxas said, "Foul! Sarcasm aside, my characterization for Korina is in today's issue. I disagree with [the] unfair portrayal of Korina and [the] use of coarse categorization of her words."

"Korina is a loving, brave, intelligent, person. I love her and stand by her," Roxas added.

The Inquirer story appeared the other day after Roxas called out from the presidential race, saying he was endorsing Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III as Liberal Party presidential bearer.

The story was accompanied by a cartoon of the Inquirer mascot Cacing saying in the bubble: "Pulongbalo pala ang CP ni Ms Palengke (So the girlfriend of Ms. Palengke is a fish seller)."

Political ads have portrayed Roxas as "Mr. Palengke" for his resume in war, which is shown on pictures of trophies.

In the story, Sandoz criticized De Quiros for supposedly describing presidential aspirants Jejomar Binay Jr. with a stutter and as "hungry for power."

Sanchez said the columnist used Roxas as apology "for making sweeping statements like that."

She also took a shot at Sen. Francisco "Kiko" Pangilinan, who had called on Roxas to give way to Aquino.

President declares period of national prayer

From page A1

national prayer for Monday "effective immediately until the stated movement."

"During this period, the nation unites in supplication to offer prayers for his eternal repose and to acknowledge for the gift of his life and considerations to our nation," she said in the proclamation.

Ms Arroyo ended Red Monday to now considered a "great spiritual leader" and "leader" in the INC flock that "he has guided with the teachings of God toward spiritual growth."

"The nation joins the Iglesia ni Cristo members in mourning the loss of their beloved leader, with prayers for his peace and for the Church Ministry's continued guidance and strength to bear their sorrow and love," she said.

For almost 10 minutes on Wednesday, men and women, especially the elderly, wept in the 10,000-seat Central Temple during the first worship service since Ka Eddy died.

He remains lie in state at the temple. Mr. Ceffu was elected during the service.

The weeping intensified when the singing led by the church choir began and as many El Bueno members and administrator of the INC Metro Manila East Locales, led the first prayer.

"Our beloved Executive Minister is gone," Tolosa said, drawing more cries of agony and loss among INC members.

It was Brod who C. Ceffu Jr., a minister and INC senior officer, who led the service.

"Weep if you must, may the Lord God understand our grief," Santiago said in Filipino.

The death of the last messenger on earth saddened many members of the church, but "God did not abandon His people, and guided the appointed executive minister with the wisdom and the power to administer to the spiritual strengthening of every member of the church," he said.

The leadership transition had been prepared long before Ka Eddy's death.

The assumption by Eduardo Manalo, 59, of the post vacated by his father would be later immediately. Before his father died, he was already the INC deputy executive minister.

MOURNERS—Iglesia ni Cristo members over the country continue to mourn and wait at the Central Temple in Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, to view the body of their spiritual leader Eraño Manalo. RAFFY LERMA

The administration of the INC is not like the typical organization.

INC members submit and obey the church administration with unquestionable and unwavering faith. Hundreds of them lined the "solemn procession from God" and entrusted with the task of spreading the word of salvation.

Santiago stressed this point when he said that the "Church is the guardian of God just as He promised He will."

"We ask God to transfer to our brother Eduardo Manalo all the power, knowledge, and fortitude that he gives our departed executive minister," Santiago said. Reports from Jerry Esplanada and Ariyo dela Cruz

GMA defends presence of US troops in Mindanao

From page A1

The President made her remarks a week after a former Navy official claimed that US troops were "embedded" with their Philippine counterparts to combat operations in Mindanao, in violation of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Retired Navy Lt. Renato Dacudao, who used to be stationed in Mindanao, said the Americans belonged to the "Special Operations Command," a unit of "highly capable and technically skilled individuals."

"They still not be deployed here if they are not conducting" Gaddao said in an affidavit.

Mr Arroyo cited the US soldiers' effort to assist government prosecutors going to Jolo and collect items to handle cases against suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf-linked group.

They were also providing transportation, she said.

Antiterror fight

"Before, almost to the minute to get to Jolo to prosecute terrorists they were afraid," Ms Arroyo said in Filipino.

"But because they're getting help now," she added, fish was not the case anymore.

"The Americans are helping a lot in our fight against terrorism," the President said in an affidavit.

She said the US government was providing the Philippine military with training and equipment to enhance its "professionalism and effectiveness."

She said the US troops were also involved in "advancing soft power by helping build schools, roads, bridges [while] building our local economy through American development assistance in Mindanao and across the nation."

"These [and other] have strengthened our paradigm for peace in Mindanao," she said.

Basilan stay

In Basilan, fully armed American soldiers, escorted by their Filipino counterparts, still move around the island province without any official coordination with local officials, Gov. Jum Akbar said.

The Americans, whose number he cannot underestimate, are stationed in the towns of Tipo-Tipo as well as Lamitan and Isabela City.

"I guess the reason why they go to huge infantries or civilians their presence here is because they might have a different program now," she said.

Vice Gov. Al Rasheed Sakkalul said he also wanted to know why the foreign soldiers were still staying in the province, which hosted the RP-US Balikatan training exercises in 2002.

Clueless

"If there's a visitor going to my house unannounced, definitely we will question them," Sakkalul said.

"We are hosts of the province, definitely we want to know who they are, how many of them are on the island, what areas do they want to develop or related support and for how long," Sakkalul said.

"[I] were to be consulted, I will request those US personnel to coordinate from here first, like the governor down to town mayors. We are the right people to say where to go that is safe and what areas are in need of more support and activities about their humanitarian missions," he added.

But Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, Western Mindanao Command chief, insisted there was prior coordination made by the AFP Operations Command and the Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines with local officials.

"There's direct communication with the municipal mayors," Dolorfino said in an interview.

Maj. John Bantawan, spokesperson of the joint task force, has not responded to an inquiry e-mail seeking for comments about the presence of the US soldiers.

Dolorfino said the US forces were conducting "training on special operations to not visit there" to Basilan. Their presence is covered by the Mutual Logistic Support Agreement, he said. With a report from Jaffe B. Alanda, Inquirer Mindanao

Japan's first lady: I met Tom Cruise in previous life

From page A1

Ms once Tom Cruise was really a Japanese and they have met in a previous life. She claims her soul has traveled to Persia on a UFO.

Miyuki Hatoyama, a former actress and wife of Yukio Hatoyama—who will likely become in as Japan's prime minister on Sept. 16—promises to become one of Japan's most colorful first ladies ever.

Sporting diamond-studded jeans and rhinestone shoulder-length bob, she looks set to liven up the traditionally staid role of a premier's wife with her outspoken and sometimes quirky personality.

Campaigning for a Democratic candidate in August, she even performed a Michael Jackson-style "Moonwalk" for people awaiting her with their cell phone cameras, according to the weekly Makarita.

A strong believer in spiritualism, Miyuki told the new "Yomiuri" tabloid she hopes to make a film in Hollywood.

She told a TV talk show to May: "There a dream that I will believe will come true, which is to make a film in Hollywood. The lead actor is Tom Cruise, of course. Why? Because I know he was Japanese in a previous life.

"I was with him then. So he would recognize me when I see him and say 'long time, no see!'" she said, though she contested the program's young interviewer not to take her seriously.

Cruise starred in the 2003 film "The Last Samurai," which was set in Japan.

Source of power

"I like all the cut," Miyuki said on the program, looking up with her eyes closed, saying she can sense high in the sky soaring prince off on imaginary sun. "Like this, bum, bum, bum. That gives me great power."

"My husband has recently started doing that too," said the 46-year-old Miyuki, who met her husband in the United States where he was a Ph.D student at Stanford.

The Democratic Party of Japan, which Miyuki fundraised heads, secured a sweeping victory in Sunday's elections for the 480-seat lower house of parliament, ending the ruling party's virtually uninterrupted grow than half-century domination of government.

Space trip

Yukio Hatoyama, 62, the grandson of a former ruling premier, will vice-nicknamed "the alien" for his eccentric style.

MIYUKI Hatoyama, wife of Democratic Party of Japan leader Yukio Hatoyama, speaks during an interview in Tokyo on August 10, 2009. Miyuki claims to have had a close encounter with another world. "While my body was asleep, I think my soul rode on a triangular-shaped UFO to Persia," she wrote in a March published last year. AFP/FILE

Mihaic, a former actress, dancer and singer in the hugely popular Tokusatsu drama series "Ultraman" group, wrote in a book published last year about her encounter upon ship about 20 years ago.

"While my body was sleeping, I think my spirit flew on a triangular-shaped UFO to Persia," she said in the book called "Short Stories Things I've Encountered," according to an Internet bookstore list, which quoted the passage from the book.

"It was an extremely beautiful place and sun very green," she said.

Similarities with Michelle

After her husband's landmark victory, Miyuki told Japanese media she was looking forward to meeting Michelle Obama, wife of US President Barack Obama, who is due to visit Tokyo later this year.

"I think she is so natural and has a kind of sensibility similar to mine," Miyuki said in a recent interview with Kyodo News agency.

She is also known for her fondness for smoking and has published several books, including "Miyuki Hatoyama's Spiritual Food." She is also in charge of making her husband look presentable and healthy.

Yukio's aid

Her husband has called Miyuki his rare shining "sun."

"There is no limit to her cheerfulness," he has said of his wife.

While many politicians' wives in Japan have played a traditionally meek and reserved role, Miyuki gives inspirational talks and has appeared on TV variety shows to discuss topics ranging from spirituality to politics.

She became an important asset for Hatoyama's election campaigns with her cheerful talk and friendly smiles.

Miyuki also serves as her husband's chief stylist, shaping his hairdo spiff and scrutinizing what he wears.

His bedrock, too

The prime minister-in-waiting has described his wife as the bedrock of his life.

"I feel relieved when I get home," he told an interviewer. "She is like an energy-rekindling hero."

When she appeared recently on a television talk show wearing a skirt made from hemp cultivated under the Imperial Household, Miyuki said she had so many hemp "full of curiosity."

"I'm a person who wants to try everything," she said, listing hobbies such as pickling vegetables, making tissue-paper art, pottery and sewing.

Journ person

Miyuki met as an actress with the silk-female Takamatsu Ensemble in the 1960s and went to the United States to her studies at Stanford University.

She began a relationship in San Francisco with Hatoyama, the scion of a political dynasty often dubbed Japan's Kennedy family. They married in 1975, after she divorced her previous husband.

The couple have two sons, an engineering scholar sons living in Paris.

She said she learned what to wear, how to greet supporters and other manners from her mother-in-law, Yasuko, a daughter of the founder of Bridgestone.

"I used to be a pure person," Reports from AP Reuters and AFP

From Libya, GMA back in Pampanga to meet Mindanao execs

CLARK FREEPORT—Fresh from her two-day trip to Libya, President Macapagal-Arroyo was back in her home province of Pampanga on Thursday and discussed with Mindanao execs on the country's situation amid the economic crisis.

Mr. Arroyo, who was guest during the closing ceremony of the Congress of Municipalities of the Philippines' Mindanao Island cluster conference here, said the country is out of three that "almost blew [on] caught and kept a positive growth."

She said the economic reforms that her administration undertook helped the country build a "firewall that stopped it from falling during the recession."

"Part of the reason is that the fiber and unpopular medicine of economic reforms that we did years ago helped build a firewall that supposed the pave more strong in the global recession downturn," Mr. Arroyo said.

"Our economic reform measure that [helped] That is why we are able to maintain economic growth during the recession is downturn where much of the world went into a recession," she said.

Citing the economy's recession and its situation in an investment destination, Mr. Arroyo said "we are ready for the economic rebound."

The focus in the business process outsourcing and tourism industries and infrastructure projects in various parts of the country are manifestations of growth, she said.

"So, overall, I am quite bullish about our prospects for which recovery [after the recession]," she said.

She said government reforms have improved the internal revenue allotment (IRA) system to local governments.

"Before we already [the] minimum, you could not even get your IRA paid in full but since the economic reform, we put new tax measure in place to see could pay for better health care, better education system, never crash and ports... and above all, you get your IRA in full," she said.

She also said the measure that the government has focused on strengthening an employment program, especially in Mindanao where six of the country's food poorest provinces belong.

These are Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga del Norte, Maguindanao, Surigao del Norte, Davao del Sur and Lanao del Norte.

Mr. Arroyo said she has asked the National Anti-Poverty Commission to visit these areas and do what it can necessary to address the problem. Charlene Gamboa, Inquirer Central Luzon

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UK woman in jewelry smuggling case fights back

By Philip C. Tubeza

A CHINESE-BRITISH WOMAN who was arrested and detained for allegedly smuggling P500 million worth of jewelry and precious gems yesterday filed criminal charges of graft and illegal arrest and detention against Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Liban, the head of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group, and seven other PAOG officers.

Siu Ting Alpha Kwok, a British national of Chinese descent, charged Liban and his people with grab, arbitrary detention, violation of domestic and multicountry conventions against warrantless, perjury and unlawful arrest.

The complaint said the respondents illegally arrested Kwok "without the benefit of any warrant to support the arrest, and on a mere suspicion of violating...the Tariff and Customs Code. Clearly she was not committing any offense at the time of her illegal arrest."

It claimed there was "no pending case nor any deportation charge" against Kwok before the Immigration bureau.

Kwok said the filed the charges after she had "exhausted all efforts available [under the] law," and because she had no no other "plain, speedy and adequate remedy to protect her personality and basic human rights."

Besides Liban, the other PAOG officers charged were Intelligence chief Guillermo Francia, legal division officer Luciano Villar, agents Capt. Col Joseph Asuncion, PO3 Florencio S. Arca, John Gutierrez, a John Doe with the alias Jay, and consultant Ruben Tagaliba.

PAOG agents staged a raid on Aug. 18 on Kwok's residence on the 17th floor of the Pacific Plaza in Ortigas, Pasig, and arrested Kwok for allegedly illegally selling precious gems.

But the PAOG officers "never filed any criminal or administrative case against Kwok before any court, tribunal, or quasi-judicial body in the Philippines," the complaint said.

Moreover, Kwok was not allowed to post bail for her provisional liberty despite having filed a petition to post bail, as suggested by Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Liban, for a noninherent criminal case, it said.

The complaint also denounced the Manila Regional trial Court for issuing a warrant against Kwok "without the authority from the Commissioner of Customs."

"Kwok's imprisonment without any legal authority constitutes a serious violation of her basic human rights," the complaint read.

It alleged that Kwok's translator refused from investigation police being made conditional on the "payment of a certain sum of money, in law abiders is a clear case of kidnapping for ransom."

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Father-figure

THE DEATH OF EXECUTIVE MINISTER ERAÑO "KA Erdy" Manalo of the Iglesia ni Cristo, who passed away last Monday at the age of 84, has plunged the church his father founded in 1914 into deep grief. For many members, the loss was more personal. The reaction of a volunteer worker at a church-affiliated TV network reflected the distress of many: "Father is gone. Father is gone," the volunteer said in Filipino, weeping.

EDITORIAL

To the millions of Iglesia members, Ka Erdy was, simply, "Tatay," the father-figure of a growing but close-knit family. To other Filipinos, especially Roman Catholics who only had a hazy notion of the beliefs of the homegrown church he led, he was a mostly mysterious figure—not because his life was shrouded in secrecy, but because he was a very simple man, and secrets so publicity. It is this quality that gave him an aura of mystery; he was unlike other religious leaders who can't help publicity or whip up congregations into a frenzy.

The Iglesia ni Cristo has been blessed, so say a rather worldly criterion, with the longevity of its leaders. Founder Felix Manalo served as executive minister for almost half a century, and his sons and successors served for over 46 years. That blessing has allowed a church famous for its discipline to hold fast to its core beliefs even in a changing world; unsurprisingly, the distinctive architecture of INC temples has enabled the church to retain a very clear image of itself even through the years.

But the INC under Ka Erdy was also quick to adapt to changing circumstances. In 1968, the church began expanding to other countries. Today, it is present in 80 countries. The INC is also very media-savvy, with its several offices housing TV networks that help broadcast the news and spread the faith.

By all accounts, Ka Erdy was a true man of God, personally modest, devoted to his family and above all, dedicated to the ministry. The deep grief INC members feel at his passing comes, not only from their belief that he was God's chosen minister, but from their keen recollection of his kindly nature.

But any discussion of the role Ka Erdy and his fast-growing church played and continues to play in Philippine society is not complete without a mention of the political influence the Iglesia ni Cristo wields—a direct consequence of its church discipline.

While it is rare now that every single member of the church comes according to the determination of the church leaders, surveys have confirmed that by far it is the most cohesive religious organization, and votes mainly as a bloc.

A telling tribute from President Macapagal-Arroyo's eldest son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo, aside when he visited the religious leader's wake, was not his only service but the crucial truth Mr. Arroyo, the congressman said, would not have become president if it weren't for Manalo.

The simple assertion is true for most presidents since the midterm of Ferdinand Marcos in 1969. And in point of fact, Ka Erdy was already massive senators then. The reasoner then was that the INC's 300,000 votes were sellable for Marcos in a contentious election. This support became one of the main reasons Marcos became the first president since Manuel L. Quezon back in Commonwealth days to be reelected.

Ka Mikey Arroyo had reason to make the church rein in the Iglesia's Central Temple, as did many other politicians. (Speaker Prospero Nograles based in well over 180 House members in the wake—barely a crystalline sign of the church's political clout.)

It should be noted, however, that when President Arroyo made her first attempt to bar rock Charter change in 2006 through a house-less constituent assembly in December 2006, the Iglesia ni Cristo was among the religious organizations that vigorously protested the self-serving maneuver's blatant immorality. Not even the President's closeness or deference to Ka Erdy Manalo could displace the stark immorality of the unconstitutional stratagem.

Mikey Arroyo may then choose to remember the support the Iglesia ni Cristo threw his mother's way in 2004, but he would do well to also remember a warning from the Bible: What the Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away. Ka Erdy's long and full life is a lesson in providence.

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Who else will give way to Noynoy?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HE HAS RIGHT PERSONAL FROM THE presidential race to give way to Noynoy Aquino was a commendable and sensible thing to do, and his detractors praise for it. It made it easier for everybody—for Noynoy for the other opposition presidential candidates, for the supporters of all of them, and for Gloria herself. Former President Joseph Estrada has already said he would step aside if Noynoy can unite the opposition. Governors Ed Panlilio of Pangasinan and Vicente Perlas of Isabela and Mayor Jejomar Binay of Makati also said they would step aside for Noynoy. The reluctant presidential candidates, are incommunicado Richard Poltar and Councilor JC de los Reyes of Kapatirang are expected to withdraw too. Even for religious leaders Eddie Villanueva and Bishop Ceferino Soliven, the two presidential candidates, there is no more reason for them to run.

Sen. Edu Manzano, who is running for vice president, said he would withdraw in favor of Roxas if the latter is chosen as Noynoy's running mate. It is almost sure that Noynoy would pick Roxas as his teammate, considering what the latter did for him.

The only joker is Sen. Manny Villar. I don't think Lil Jinkee can stop him from running for the presidency.

Cha Enriquez and Loren Legarda who, like Noynoy, are popular with the youth because they themselves, like Noynoy, are young, are the best bets of the Nacionalista Party's Cynthia Villar. Even Legarda's political party is not strong enough to run the personal Liberal Party bigshot than the personal Liberal Party. Will they also give way to Noynoy?

Noynoy is being lionized by his youth. "He is not mature enough to be president," they say. The answer is being said of Dan and Loren.

But I don't think Noynoy is immature. They do not yet have the bad habits and political debts of older politicians. Despite that vast value was wrong with previous presidents—they had become blind and thick-skinned because they were not carrying too much political baggage. It's about time we have a president (when the interest groups of campaign donors who have contributed huge sums in every election the winning politicians has cut it, or of political leaders who have supported him in elections after election) who is not beholden to any of the political baggage yet, so it is easier for them to tread the straight and narrow.

That is not true of all young politicians, by the way. Look at Mikey and Bam Aquino. What was it that made Mikey Arroyo Aquino Laurel run?

What Noynoy has going for him is his person, the genes he got from his parents. I don't think Mayor would sully the memory of his parents who both fought for democracy and good governance. Rather he would want to perpetuate their legacy of honesty and integrity. He owes it to the millions of Filipinos who love his parents even in death and now look up to him for deliverance from the corruption and injustice that ravaged the country in their time.

What he needs to do is to find out for sure the millions of dollars Kamaganak Inc. that called the name of his mother. Most presidents have had problems with relatives who could not resist the temptation of taking advantage of their positions. President Elpidio Quirino had his brother Toto; Ramon Magsaysay had his brother Cesar; President Diosdado Macapagal had his brother Ding; Marcos had his wife and in-laws; Ramos had his alleged mistress, Amparo had his real mistresses, GMA has her husband and sons. Magsaysay avoided all that by not having his relatives living nearby so they can't do with government and contracts. Noynoy should do the same thing.

* * *

On the California properties of presidential candidate Mikey and Bam Aquino, it is not only their statements of assets and liabilities and net worth (SALN) that are important but their explanation of how they acquired their wealth. Is their salaries from the House of Representatives justify the sudden jump in their assets? As far as we know, they have no other sources of income. The law on court-plotted wealth requires a government official to explain the manner of his wealth. Failing to explain it satisfactorily, the law presumes the wealth to be ill-gotten and the wealth to be forfeited in favor of the government.

The government does not have to prove that it is ill-gotten. The burden of proof is on the defendant. If he is not able to prove that his income is commensurate to his wealth, that is enough to prove guilt. The reason is that it is very difficult to prove corruption in government even if it is obvious. Naturally, the perpetrators take pains to hide their ill-gotten wealth. That is why the framers of the law, which was enacted to root out corruption, put the burden of proof on the defendant.

It is like the libel law, where the burden of proof is on the defendant. If a defamatory article is deemed libelous if the author or editor cannot prove that he has justifiable reasons for writing and publishing it. That is what is called "presumed malice" or "malice in law" as against "actual malice" or "malice in fact." The government's case in the court is over as the very beginning until the defendant can prove that he has sufficient defenses to overcome this presumption. It is the same thing with the law on unexplained wealth. The defendant must be able to explain that he has sufficient legitimate income to justify his wealth.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE. My grandfather is a native lawyer, old man who complains about almost everything. Told him Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago is running for president. He says we're Mystery Aquino, he exclaimed, "Aiss, anak ng mayor ng daisy pinakasalan?"

"If you're going voting maging president, a lawyer ka?"

"Aiss, kaya pinagsasabi ng mayor?"

"Eh, si Noynoy Aquino, gusto nya?"

"Aiss, bobo sa batasan."

"Eh, kung si Manny Villar?"

"Aiss, wag na naman!

Another plunder in the making

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

WHY IS THE ARROYO GOVERNMENT SO willing to compromise a case that the government has already won? The once-less-final order made it easy. Nevertheless, collected hundreds of cases and numerous counsel farmers since 1975—are now after firmland blueprints and the government's legal lawyer—the case that decides one set of the state's power to use. In 2004, the Supreme Court held that shares of stock in San Miguel Corp. which had been privatized with the coconut levy money are owned by the coconut farmers. From now on, the money had been transformed. Though the shares were held in the name of Cocolevy, a federation of plantation owners created during the martial law era to implement the levy, the true owners were the farmers whose money had been used to buy them. Thus, without another levy, it was proved by the Supreme Court, shows that the government held the shares in trust for these farmers. These shares today comprise 26 percent of SMC, the only counter-balance in the 20 percent held by Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. with the balance held by the SMC Pension Fund and other groups allied with him (and a final 11 percent held by the public).

And now the strange twist. Two weeks ago, the government came to the Supreme Court with a motion to have to draft corporate control rights to Cojuangco. The scheme was supposedly approved by the controlling parties before the Sandiganbayan. Since there is no longer opposing it, it will leave the Court no choice but to approve the deal. It will point the Court into a corner where it will have no option but to give its blessing—and so there will disappear the last opinions from probate charges in the future.

That is why yesterday, former Senate President Jovito R. Salonga, former Sen. Wigberto E. Tañada, Representative Neri Colmenares, Bayan-ayo and Teodoro Casiño of the leader of the coconut farmers, Oscar E. Reyes, issued a statement and signed the court documents that will enable them to intervene and block the conspiracy. They gathered at a press conference held at Dr. Ellen Joyce Roces, and with the secretary of Barrio Barangay (which I chair, together with well professor Flavio Miller is co-chair, and Raul Cupaling is executive director), explained the hidden merchant in the latest maneuver.

It appears at a most instantaneous proposal. The Office of the Solicitor General is requested the Supreme Court to allow the government to convert the stocks in question from common shares into preferred shares. That swap is not innocent at all.

First, the government will lose its control in the SMC board and surrender those seats to the nominees of Cojuangco, who also controls the corporation's control. Two, the OSG has also asked the SC to lift the "sequestered" status of the shares. At present, the shares are unbuyable, and another would mark the approval of government. Then they will become voting shares in the farmers. With the lifting, the shares are released from all such constraints. Instantly they become clean, as if they hadn't ever been treated as ill-gotten wealth. The net effect is that, without spending a single centavo, Cojuangco will be able to recover everything he had paid to Erlea L. and wasn't, at no cost to him, and a tiple-gain in the wealth of the holdings. "Congress ang gobierno sa ating mambila."

Third, the deal actually reserves for SMC (and its "nominees") the right to redeem the converted shares into their value of common shares ("issue price"). Should the shares appreciate by say, 25 percent, this is potentially a 39.9 billion profit. Should the shares depreciate, the deal of course says that SMC has no obligation to redeem. The contract is onerous and disadvantageous to the government.

Worse, the deal comes any punishment imposed by the Sandiganbayan on the hated party. Cojuangco, a corporate raider, is entitled to the coconut monopoly during the martial law years.

Finally, the strategies most suspect, and leads to the possibility that the deal is being sucked to finance the administration's war chest for the 2010 elections. As Ka Erdy Manalo often, it doesn't mean anything if the SC affirms the government's victory after GMA is out. They need the money now, preferably quick cash. Upon the conversion of the shares, these preferred shares will enjoy a guaranteed 6 percent per annum, approximately 19.5 billion a year. That is why they are willing to trade the shares at a lower value, because what matters is that they get to spread the money themselves.

Salonga, Tañada, Rosapit, Colmenares and Senator are filing their intervention today, but there is enough time and hopefully enough outrage to stop this conspiracy to rob banks.

Oscar Reyes spoke of the saga of the ancestral levy as the "Embryo to my existing" (Library of the coconut farmers), summed up by the conclusion of farmers and businessmen. The best labor sums that diverted a mere 37.28 million for the 2004 presidential campaign pales in comparison to the latest deal in the case levy scandal. Today the saying goes, the government, congress and the Supreme Court is the only party a client in the campaign to recover ill-gotten wealth that began at John L. Healy of what Cory Aquino needed to is now being betrayed and battered away by the Arroyo government.

It was as if Edsa I never happened. For some people, edsa I exists at the helm. Happy days are here again indeed.

(Comments to pascal@newsmail.com)

Baguio folk have little to celebrate after 100 years

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY CELEBRATED ON Tuesday the centenary of its foundation in a chartered city east of two cities in the Philippines with an appointive mayor. Manila being the other. Baguio's success is confined to its state as a city, where politics played a very small part. It was envisioned by a city manager hauled by the chairman of a commission.

A hundred years after its founding, Baguio's residents have an identity or vision crisis and are in a quandary over the future of their city. They are perplexed over how Baguio is to be the highest of urban centers that reflects most of the lowland cities of the Philippines and to save the last pine forest cover that has made it the summer capital of the Philippines with its cold-weather climate.

The centenary celebrations was surrounded with controversy by the legislative [House Bill 2853] introduced by Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan seeking to revise and update the city charter. The bill, already passed by the House, seeks to codify the charters to "reflect the present and future needs of the city." It would do away with the boundary dispute between Benguet and Tuba. Benguet, implement the land use development plan of the city, improve the powers and disposition of disposable and disposable public lands, improve the livelihood opportunities, and prevent squatting and land speculation.

The charter revision plan takes off from a document known as "The Guiao," which was drafted by noted Ifugao lawyer Antonio Guiao, a former Ifugao governor who is the godfather of Ifugao Rep. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. Guiao's draft charter was supported by the mayors, but opposed by the city council. The debate on the charter revision is a proxy debate for Baguio's political, social, economic and cultural crisis assembled under the glass of Innovative Development Authority (IDA).

The IDA's main contribution was suspended executed

Ka Erdy Manalo
(1925 - 2009)

Isang Tunay na Pilipino:

- Maka-Diyos
- Maka-Kalikasan
- Maka-Tao
- Maka-Bansa

Kami ay nakikiisa sa pagdadalamhati ng lahat sa pagpanaw ni Kapatid na Eraño G. Manalo, Tagapamahalang Pangkalahatan ng Iglesia ni Cristo.

Mula kay
Secretary Lito Atienza
at Kagawaran ng Kapaligiran at Likas-Yaman

Crusade vs infomercials

LETTERS

THE CAMPAIGN OF SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO to put a stop to "infomercials" featuring Cabinet members and local government executives is hearing fruits. Augusto Syjuco, Jr., top honcho of the government's Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), has agreed to stop airing his TV commercials (ads) with Sarah Geronimo.

Nothing like a volcanic temper erupting every now and then. I used to laugh at Santiago's antics, but now I see they have their use. Will the other officials react positively or will their vanities defend the indefensible?

But I wish Santiago will not be myopic and see only the wrongdoing of the Cabinet and local officials. How about the infomercials of her fellow senators? If she would drive to Macapagal Avenue, Pasay City or Sales, Roxas Blvd., she'd see Department of Tourism posters bearing the face of Sen. Richard Gordon and a provincial governor. The poster campaign has been around longer than the ads/commercials and TV infomercials. Who pays for this—the GOCC, Philippine Tourism Authority or Dancy Pete-Philippines? The two faces occupy more than half of the poster, and in the little space that is left is the name of the province and "WOW Philippines." How much is being spent on these posters? This is the most ineffectual use of resources I have seen. I am sure Chairbat can say he is just feeding his name and face to the tourism department's promotion campaign. But so can Vice President Noli de Castro, Executive Secretary Josh Lozas, Tejano and others.

Let us see if Senator Santiago can serve the same fire and venom to her colleagues.

—MERANDEWMANNOL
merandewman@gmail.com

Sa ngalan ng aking pamilya at ng **mga taga-Ikalawang Distrito ng Lungsod ng Caloocan**, taos puso akong nakikiramay sa **Kapatiran ng Iglesia ni Cristo** sa pagpanaw ng Tagapamahalang Pangkalahatan

ERAÑO "Ka Erdy" G. MANALO
(January 2, 1925 – August 31, 2009)

Kaisa kami ng buong **Iglesia ni Cristo** at sambayanang Pilipino sa **pagdadalamhati** sa paglisan ng isang **huwarang gabay at dakilang pinuno.**

Congresswoman Mitch "MC" Cajayon
2nd District, Caloocan City

City of Puerto Princesa

The people of Puerto Princesa City joins the entire Iglesia ni Cristo community in paying respects to its esteemed leader

Eraño G. Manalo

who passed away on 31 August 2009. May Ka Erdy's teachings continue to shine upon our people and the rest of the world.

Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn
Vice Mayor Cecil Bayron
and the Sangguniang Panlunsod ng Puerto Princesa

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Lower Cagayan Valley power rates urged

Bishop close to GMA says current costs in region 'appalling'

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—THE REGIONal Development Council in Cagayan Valley is pushing for the reduction of the cost of electricity in the region, after a recent study showed that the region has one of the highest power rates in the country.

Catholic Bishop Ramon Villena, RDC chair and a close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said the council, through the Luzon Area Development Committee (LADEC), is asking the national government, through the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), to lower power charges for the region's consumers.

Appalling

"We were appalled by the findings that we're in Region 2 have one of the most expensive costs of electricity when we have tons of the power generating facilities," Villena told the business.

He cited a study which urged the LADEC to ask the ERC to reduce generation charges for the region, being the host of the 360-megawatt Magat hydroelectric power plant in Isabela and the 130-megawatt Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project in Nueva Ecija.

THE TWO namps who are among the closest to President Macapagal-Arroyo—Ramon Villena (at left) and Heron Quirino (right)—following Quirino's election as the vice president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

This 310-megawatt supply of electricity from these two generating plants in Cagayan Valley comprises 10.23 percent of the total 3,722-megawatt power produced by nine power plants supplying the Luzon grid, he said.

Despite the presence of these facilities, 90 villages in Cagayan Valley remain without electricity, Villena said, quoting the study's findings.

Power reforms

The study, conducted by the RDC last year, has been adopted by the three-year regional development plan until 2010, to push for reforms in the power sector.

Cagayan Valley is serviced by seven electric cooperatives in Batanes (Beneleco), Cagayan (Cagelco I and II), Isabela (Iselco I and II), Nueva Vizcaya (Nuvelco) and Quirino (Quirelco).

Records showed that the average power rate in the region is P6.46/kwh, while Benanlec charges the cheapest at P3.95/kWh.

Villena said he was concerned that the high cost of electricity is taking its toll on poor households, comprising 93.85 percent of consumers in the region.

Unregulated charges

The RDC study found that the high cost of electricity is due to "unregulated charges" in generation, transmission and distribution, and the soft implementation of the law concerning openness issues and value added tax (VAT).

As an offshoot of the deregulation of generation charges, Cagelco I, Iselco I, Quirelco and Nuvelco have been increasing power generation charges from 2008 to 2007, the study said.

The RDC is also asking the ERC to lower the existing systems loss cap from 14 to 9 percent, as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira).

Systems loss is the difference between the cost of power bought by an electric cooperative from the National Transmission Corp. and that which it has sold to its consumers.

Cheap sources

Under the law, the cooperatives is allowed to recoup systems losses by charging its consumers a maximum of 9 percent of the total cost.

At 23.27 percent, Quirelco posted the highest charge of systems loss, followed by Nuvelco (17.15 percent), Cagelco I (13.39 percent), Iselco II (13.08 percent and Iselco I (11.63 percent), the RDC study showed.

Villena said they would appeal to the ERC to strictly enforce a provision in the Epira requiring a zero-percent NPC-to-generation charges, as well as to exempt households with monthly consumption of less than 100 kWh from paying government taxes.

The RDC is also urging local governments to develop cheaper alternative sources of electricity, such as those presented by wind, solar, mini and biodiesel. —Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Syjuco faces probe at House for P60-M overprice in supply

By Nestor P Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—ASSEMBLYMAN ROD Ark Mapalad will file new week a resolution at the House of Representatives pushing for an inquiry on the alleged P60-million overprice in the purchase of sewing equipment by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda).

The Commission on Audit (COA), in a report dated March 12, 2009, disclosed that Tesda awarded four contracts to Vic Jones & Co. Inc. for the purchase of sewing materials worth 303,130,054.55, which were overpriced by P60,964,195.30 or 20.10 percent.

In an e-mailed statement on Thursday, Magkasad said Tesda Director General Augusto Syjuco would also be made to explain his alleged involvement in the overpricing during the congressional budget hearing of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

"Tesda gets more than half of the labor department's annual budget allocation. It actually spent P28.3 million for a single 'infomercial,'" said the labor leader.

"This new allegation of corruption will not be condoned, especially by workers who are supposed to be benefiting from Tesda's budget."

Magkasad said Tesda was proposing a P5.85-billion budget next year from DOLE's P6.54 billion budget proposal.

He said an investigation was necessary because Syjuco has been linked to a string of anomalies.

"Syjuco has a record of getting involved in graft cases but he has a political backer in the Palace. He is favored and in her early this year, Malacañang even increased by P4.66 billion the budget for the training for work Pangalang Ghq is Scholarship Program handled by Tesda," he said.

In an earlier interview, Syjuco had denied any involvement in the alleged overpricing. He said he has ordered an investigation by a team that he formed in Tesda.

Tesda deputy director general Rogelio Pijuan, head of the eight-member investigating committee, earmarked January to June saying his order had been "only ministerial."

TESDA CHIEF Augusto Syjuco

Cops nab 2 Chinese 'scientists of drug makers' in Sta. Rosa

STA. ROSA CITY—TWO CHINese nationals described by police as "scientists of drug manufacturers" were arrested at an early morning raid on an illegal drug laboratory in a subdivision here yesterday.

Members of the Philippine National Police Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (AIDSOTF) conducted the raid to serve an arrest warrant issued by a Manila court.

Senior Supt. Francisco Uyanel Jr., AIDSOTF deputy chief, identified the arrested Chinese as Hong Chi Peng, 43, and Go Chin Gon, 26.

They were arrested inside a two floor apartment in Villa Segovia Estates in Barangay Subiranga around 8 a.m.

Uyanel said the two Chinese have been renting the apartment since August but have been moving from one place to another.

"We caught them in the act of cooking (shabu)," Uyanel said.

Police found in the apartment a hydrogenator, mixer and chemicals used to produce shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) in the so-called "kitchen-type laboratory."

Uyanel said the equipment could produce at least 10 kilograms of shabu daily, with a street value of P7.14 billion.

"They are considered the scientists of drug manufacturers," Uyanel said of the two suspects.

The police conducted the raid to serve an arrest warrant issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 26.

A certain Vilma Dee and two others included in the warrant still remain at large.

Some of the crime operatives are still conducting an inventory of the manufactured drugs and equipment.

"We are still investigating which group they (the suspects) belong to," Uyanel said.

He said the suspects would be brought to the AIDSOTF office in Camp Crame.

The government has stepped up its campaign against illegal drugs. With Joel P. Clinio, Inquirer Southern Luzon

HIDDEN TREASURE! Tour biz are taken to a boat ride to discover the wonders of Coron, Palawan, among them the Kayangan Lake shown here. This is one of Palawan's main treasured attractions.

New floods prolong villages' suffering

COTABATO CITY— A 19-year-old boy drowned and thousands of villagers fled their homes in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, when the Simuay River overflowed anew and flooded six villages on Tuesday, officials said yesterday.

Sultan Kudarat Mayor Bai Rhing Matba said a three-day downpour triggered the floods and brought low lying villages of the town under water.

Rescue teams have yet to recover from previous floods.

She said Jhoy-Jhoy Lunar was playing in the floods when he was swept by strong current and drowned. His body, Matba said, was found few hours later.

She identified the flooded villages as Bulala, Colonia Torres, Ambanc, Barbaonan and Minanculla.

"Water rose to as high as the chest when the Simuay River overflowed Tuesday morning," Matba said.

She said residents were barely coping with last month's flooding when the fresh floods took place.

"Life is difficult for our people, they have been in this situation for quite sometime, we are helpless," Matba said, adding that local government resources are running out.

Najib Dilangalen, Cotabato City district engineer, said the only way to stop further flooding in Sultan Kudarat and Cotabato City is to re-channel the Simuay River.

Dilangalen said unless the river is re-channeled, the 32 low lying villages of Cotabato City and nearby Sultan Kudarat, which have been under water since July 23, would always be flooded during the rainy season.

He described the re-channeling as urgent.

The Presidential Task Force on the Rehabilitation of the Agusan Cotabato Rivers and the Presidential Task Force on Mindanao River Basin, which are chaired by Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, earlier asked Malacañang to set aside P62 million for the re-channeling of the Simuay River.

Quevedo said part of the fund will be used to removing silt from the river and planting trees along its banks.

Dilangalen agreed, saying those almost fed in the entry of a huge volume of silt coming from the Simuay River to the Rio Grande de Mindanao.

Quevedo said the national government must "urgently address the problem because people are suffering, agricultural crops and infrastructures are destroyed."

"A terrible tragedy," he said of the floods.

Heavy rains from the southwest monsoon also brought floods to three towns and a city in Region Occidental on Wednesday, according to officials.

Region Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) Spokesperson Lolita Fernandez said 70 families—25 in San Enrique, 20 in Pontevedra and 25 in La Carlota City—had to be evacuated when their homes were under water. With Fernandez and Charlie Jarlene Angeles' dispatches; with a report from Carla Pacheco, Inquirer Visayas

RESIDENTS in a village in Esan Piang, Maguindanao, take boat rides where floods took over what used to be roads in their communities.

DOJ admits more witnesses led by Dumlao

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) panel that reopened the inquiry into the murders of publisher Salvador Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito yesterday admitted additional witnesses led by former Supt. Glenn Dumlao.

The DOJ panel, led by Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong also admitted as witnesses William Lopez (a brother of witness Jimmy Lopez who was shot dead by unknown assailants on the eve of the preliminary investigation hearing), Alex Diray and Willy Cabuquin (who, along with the Lopez brothers, said in affidavits executed in 2003 that they helped agents of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force kill and bury the remains of Dacer and Corbito on Nov. 24, 2000, in Cavite).

The DOJ reopened the investigation into the Dacer-Corbito case to include this time Sen. Panfilo Lacson as an accused based on the affidavits of his former aide, former Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao.

After the panel rejected the motion of Lacson's lawyers not to entertain other witnesses for the preliminary investigation, Dumlao and the three other key witnesses swaffirmed the affidavits they had testified to before a Manila court saying the double-murder case.

"I am not afraid. I am given adequate security," Dumlao told reporters before he was quickly taken away by armed National Bureau of Investigation agents after yesterday's hearing.

When asked if he felt threatened following his fellow's brutal murder, William Lopez said: "I'm not afraid. No one can say how long we will live."

William Lopez served as an "asset" or civilian informer of Supt. Teofilo Vilia, another kingpin Lacson aide who himself was gunned down in January 2005 in Texas, Cavite, before he could testify for the prosecution in the court trial.

Dumlao, the Lopez brothers, Diray and Cabuquin were summoned by the DOJ-created panel as additional witnesses to back Mancao's testimony against Lacson, upon the request of the lawyers of the Dacer family.

Lacson had tried but failed to get a restraining order from the Court of Appeals to stop the preliminary investigation. He was given more time to formally answer the double-murder charges against him.

Meanwhile, Ong approved the motion of Lacson's lawyers to subpoena the NBI to produce the autopsy-no. denial records of Dacer and the forensic evidence taken at the alleged site where Dacer and Corbito's burned remains were found.

Front page 4

6 tagged in Dacer killing

Front page 4

partners after the hearing. Mancao said he affirmed his earlier affidavit where he named those people who were involved in Operation Delta, which, according to him, was ostensibly designed to neutralize Dacer.

Reporters were barred from covering the hearing at Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 18 under Judge Mym Garcia Fernandez.

Mancao is to be cross-examined by the defense on Sept. 15.

Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito were abducted in Manila on Nov. 24, 2000, taken to Cavite, and killed by strangulation on the same day. Their burned remains were found months later.

'I've said everything'

In an interview after the hearing, Mancao said he was hoping that his testimony would be "substantive" enough for him to be dropped from the list of the accused and to become a state witness.

"I've said everything. I've outlined on who were involved and who masterminded this case," he said in Filipino.

Mancao also batted at those whom he had implicated for were now claiming that they did not know him.

"They're liars," he said without batting names. "After all our efforts, they're now where they are. It was we who arrested Lacson, who killed ourselves ... It's a combat."

Both Estrada and Lacson, the President and the Philippine National Police director general, respectively, at the time of the twin murders, have consistently denied involvement.

In a statement he issued yesterday, Lacson said:

"Either Mancao deliberately lied under oath or he didn't know what he was talking about in court. I am sorry for him. While I can understand the tremendous pressure being applied by the administration to pin me down, he should at least stick to the truth and respect his oath by stating only the facts, and not become another epidemic.

"For the nth time, I maintain my innocence and even absence of knowledge pertaining to the Dacer-Corbito case."

'Only for survival'

Lawyers for Lacson said the other accused in the double-murder case told reporters that Mancao's testimony was intended for his survival.

"He is just complying [with] what is expected of him," said Alex Avisado, Lacson's legal counsel. "This is only for his survival. We understand his position. We understand that he has to save himself."

Avisado claimed that Mancao's testimony was based on "hearsay."

"He never said he received direct orders from President Estrada or (Lacson)," Avisado said.

The lawyer said Mancao's statement that the accused were persons "who, as far as he knows, have knowledge of the murder of Dacer and Corbito."

Avisado said Mancao named Estrada, Lacson, Aquino, Dumlao, Vilia, Ayuda and himself as "those who, in one way or another, may have knowledge of Operation Delta."

Lawyer Dante Atienza, who represents the other accused, particularly SPO1 Cesar-oscar Fuentebella, Bernard Bollos and Rogelio Ciurlo, claimed that Mancao based his testimony on the pencil slips he had found at the PNCOTF office.

"He does not directly know anything about Operation Delta. When he found the dispatch slips, he acted second. He asked Colonel Dumlao what Operation Delta is, and who are part of the operations. That is the basis of his knowledge," Atienza said.

Overheard discussion

According to a source at the Manila RTC, Mancao told the court that he had knowledge about Operation Delta because he overheard Lacson and Aquino discussing it.

The source confirmed that Mancao named Estrada, Lacson and Aquino, among others, as those who had direct involvement in the twin murders.

"Mancao told the court that he knew that the operation had the approval of Estrada and Lacson," said the source, who asked not to be named for lack of authority to give information to the media.

The source added: "He said that while they were on board a vehicle on the way to a restaurant, he heard Lacson ordering Aquino to proceed with Operation Delta, in which Aquino answered: 'We have another operation, the Operation Delta.'

"According to Mancao, Lacson then ordered Aquino: 'Pagudpurin ng sibat.'"

The source said Mancao told the court that he was wondering why his men were being used in the operation.

Mancao also testified that it was Dumlao who conducted the initial investigation of Dacer, the source added.

Dumlao was also summoned to the court yesterday but was later ordered by the judge to leave.

"The court prohibits a witness to hear the testimony of a fellow witness," Tupaea explained.

Heavy security

Dumlao arrived at Manila City Hall at around 1:45 p.m., a few minutes ahead of Mancao, in heavy security.

Both Mancao and Dumlao were escorted by heavily armed agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Ricardo Diaz, chief of the NBI counterterrorism division, said additional security for the two men was provided following the killing on Wednesday of witness Jimmy Lopez. (See story on Page A1.)

Members of the Manila Police District's anti-squad were seen inspecting the court premises a few hours before the hearing.

As in previous hearings, journalists were barred from covering the court proceedings.

Aside from a cordon coming from only parties to the case were allowed inside the courtroom, a copy of the Supreme Court en banc resolution dated Oct. 22, 1991, regarding live TV and radio coverage of court hearings was pasted on the courtroom door.

A member of the court staff said the resolution was pasted yesterday morning upon the order of Judge Fernandez.

Earlier at the NBI, Mancao landed at Senada who had denied knowing him.

'Who else?'

"He is a liar. After all the service we gave him, he is just going to leave you hanging," Mancao told reporters minutes before he was taken to court.

Mancao initially did not name the person he was referring to. But when asked by reporters if he was talking about Estrada, he said: "Who else should I be talking about?"

He added: "I worked under him 24/7, sacrificed a lot to help maintain his being an authoritarian. It is unfair of him to say that he does not know me. I have been a westerner and he likes gambling, but now he is a liar."

Asked if one of the reasons he failed to the United States before being deported was his fear of ending up like witness Jimmy Lopez, Mancao said: "Mangod na ang isiin (I've been afraid for a long time).

"I do not want to make a confession (on Lopez's killing). Investigations are going on. Investigators are looking at all angles. But I am not ruling out the possibility that it could have something to do with the [double murder] case, considering the timing."

Mancao also said he was now confined to distress what he knew.

"I have mastered the courage ..." he said. "I am thankful with the way the NBI is providing me security. I am not afraid, not at all. But I have to be careful because I want to live till the ends. I will have this battle and come out with the truth."

Asked to comment, Estrada denied Mancao's accusations. He refused to comment on the new charges, saying it would be a waste of time.

"I don't want to dignify that," he said.

Palace condemns killing of Dacer witness

Front page A1

yesterday morning as the probe into key investigators of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

The National Bureau of Investigation has formed a team to investigate Lopez's killing jointly with the PNP.

NBI Director Nonce Mantaring told the reporters that the team would be headed by the bureau's intelligence Special Operations Division led by Hero Cosme.

'Constantly cloud'

"We strongly denounce the murder of Jimmy Lopez and a female companion by parties yet unknown and will be apprehended," Golez said, citing information from a command statement.

He said the killing cloaked "the depths to which the murderous minds of this dastardly deed are willing to go to evade the full and meaningful justice."

"It is but the latest incident in a mind-crime wave that has already claimed the lives of so many alleged conspirators in the Dacer-Corbito case, while leaving the rest to go into hiding here and abroad," he said.

Golez said Lopez's killing was "a sobering reminder" that "the real forces of evil" were very much around and could strike "in a moment's notice."

"They may try to confuse the public but they should know that in the end, their crimes will catch up with them and justice will again prevail," he said.

At least six other persons connected in the Dacer-Corbito case have been killed.

Sen. Panfilo Vilia, who was among the accused in the twin murders, was gunned down in Texas, Cavite on Jan. 7, 2003.

He died instantly from eight gunshot wounds while in the home of a councilor identified in Pantaleo Serrano.

Vilia was a leader of the Wanpan branch of the now defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

The task force was under the supervision of Lacson, who was PNP director general at the time of the twin murders.

More angles

Golez, a deputy spokesperson of Ms Arroyo, downplayed questions on whether Lacson had deposed President Joseph Estrada—the main personalities linked to the Dacer-Corbito case and other heavy-hitters involved—should be asked to shed light on Lopez's killing.

"I'm pretty sure that the investigators are looking at more angles than we can think of. It's better for the authorities to say whom they will investigate," Golez said.

But he expressed doubt that Lopez's killing would weaken the case against the respondents.

"The justice secretary mentioned that the testimonies were already taken. All these testimonies can still be used before the court," he said.

Golez echoed the statement of the DOJ that Lopez waived his right to security protection after giving his testimony to a Manila court in March 2005.

"That made him vulnerable," Golez said.

Lopez was a former civilian agent of the PAOCTF. He had said that it was from his house in Cavite that Dacer and Corbito were taken to a nearby creek and strangled.

'Intimidation'

Elsewhere, Senator Lacson expressed dismay over what he said was the propensity of the DOJ to treat him as the usual suspect in the twin murders.

In reporting to the media on Wednesday that Lopez had been shot dead in his house in Trece Martires City, Angel's Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor said the killing was "a strong indication that the enemy is going to do everything to put a cap to the reopening of the case."

Blancaflor added that "nothing can stop the relief of justice from running"—a statement that did not sit well with Lacson.

"First of all, it's too early for the DOJ to speculate and insinuate that [Lopez's killing] is connected to the Dacer-Corbito case. For all we know, there is another motive or reason why he was killed," the senator said in Filipino.

Lacson volunteered the information that initial investigation by the Cavite police showed that the Lopez killing was not connected to the twin murders.

"We still see basis, ... this is clearly related to other real personal [issues]. The police are looking at all angles, so if [Blancaflor] is a responsible DOJ official, he should not be quick to make accusations," Lacson said.

"What is painful is Undersecretary Blancaflor is quick to insinuate Cleo participation in the Lopez killing[]. I don't know why he is angry at me," the senator said.

'Failed' protection program

Lacson said he did not know Lopez and the other witnesses "personally" and that whatever "affirmation" of their written testimonies—are for yesterday—was not related to his purported role in the twin murders.

"Nobody [among the witnesses] has implicated me," Lacson said.

He also dialed NBI officials and those supervising the DOJ witness protection program for their failure to ensure Lopez.

"It is proper for them to review the security being accorded to those under protection programs. It only means that there was failure [on their part]," he said.

But Mantaring denied that Lopez had been in NBI custody when he was killed.

"[Lopez] has long been out of our custody immediately after he testified before the court as one of the accused and placed under the witness protection program, he waived the security and protection aspect," Mantaring said.

He said Lopez chafed under the protection program's many restrictions and conditions, but enjoyed the accompanying financial assistance.

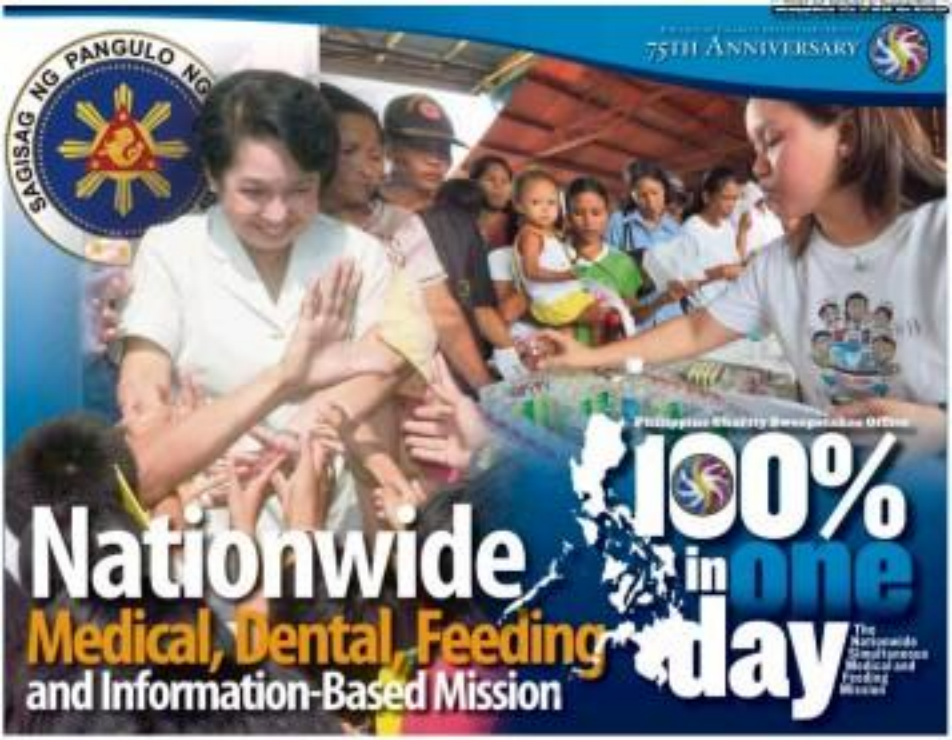
"We only had him under our custody after he was arrested as one of the accused in the Dacer-Corbito case. Our custody of him ended after he was discharged as one of the ac-

WILLIAM LOPEZ is guarded by an NBI agent after attending the preliminary investigation at the Department of Justice office in Manila. William is the brother of Jimmy Lopez, star witness in the Dacer-Corbito case, who was also shot dead on Sept. 2, 2009. RAFI IMAM

Continued from page A1

cused," Mantaring said.

With reports from Jeannette I. Andrade, Michael Lim Ubac and PDI Research



Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office

Nationwide 100% in one day

Medical, Dental, Feeding and Information-Based Mission

The Nationwide Simultaneous Medical and Feeding Mission

Two million patients. 100,000 volunteers. 2,000 medical mission sites.

On September 6, 2000, a Sunday, more than 100,000 doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, health workers, medical professionals and concerned Filipino citizens from the government and private sector leave the comforts of their home to perform the biggest act of charity in the country, so far.

These Good Samaritans, in a massive display of collective volunteerism, offer their services for free as partners of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) in providing medical and dental services to more than two million Filipinos— all in a single day.

Dubbed as the "100 Percent in One Day" project, the PCSO's nationwide medical, dental and information-based mission aims to cover all of the country's 41,995 barangays.

"This is a first-of-its-kind project in the Philippines that provides fast access to medical and charity care from PCSO and its partners to poor Filipinos all over the country in one day," explains PCSO General Manager and Vice Chair Rosario Uriarte.

The project is envisioned to be both a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of PCSO, and a window for marginalized Filipinos from all over the country to access medical care and organized charity assistance.

For the medical and dental missions, the PCSO expects to cover 25,197 barangays in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, representing 60 percent of the total number of barangays in the country.

There are more than 2,000 medical mission sites to be set up all over the country on September 6, each site capable of providing service to 1,000 to 1,500 patients.

A medical mission site is manned by four doctors, two dentists, four nurses and one pharmacist. These health professionals are assisted by 30 to 40 volunteers who are in charge of physical set-up and crowd control.

Aside from general checkups and minor surgeries, eye examinations, bone scan and ear check monitor will be available in selected medical mission sites located in government hospitals and rural clinics.

Medicines to be distributed free to patients at the sites include amoxicillin drops, capsules and suspension; metropolol tablets; mefenamic acid, paracetamol drops and tablets; and ascorbic drops, tablets and syrups.

"PCSO has been doing monthly medical and dental missions for several years now," says Uriarte. "But this is the first time we'll hold it in large scale in one day, targeting more than two million patients."

In Metro Manila alone, more than 150,000 beneficiaries are expected to avail of free medical and dental services offered in some 100 mission sites spread throughout the National Capital Region.

The medical sites in Metro Manila are manned by volunteers from the seven Catholic diocese affiliated with Caritas, which mobilized lay leaders and church workers to assist the health professionals in the medical mission sites.

The information-based mission, on the other hand, is expected to cover 100 percent of the 41,995 barangays.

Under this component, barangay health workers and residents are encouraged to send to the PCSO through Short Messaging System (SMS) or text message the name and profile of a patient in their community who intends to seek financial assistance from the charity agency.

This would allow the PCSO to maintain a database of prospective beneficiaries whose cases would have to be evaluated to determine who may qualify for the medical assistance.

The feeding missions would be conducted in selected barangays, mostly in depressed areas, in coordination with church-based groups and civic organizations.

The "One Hundred Percent in One Day" project, according to Uriarte, is envisioned to be an annual activity that will serve as a vehicle for spreading the "charity virus," and make organized and systematic sharing coupled with volunteerism as a way of life for Filipinos.

De Castro another reluctant candidate

By TJ Burgonio
and Alcuin Papa

DES. RUSSIAS "NOYNOY" Aquino III said the only one reluctant to run for president was Vice President Noli de Castro is, too.

The first that De Castro has not declared his plan could even a panel that he's not "too eager" for the presidency, Gabriel Claudio, President Macapagal-Arroyo's political adviser, said yesterday.

De Castro, however, is set to announce anytime now whether he will run.

"VP Noli de Castro has maintained respectable survey ratings in spite of the fact that he has not declared his plans. He's not too eager (over an oke!), to use the term for the presidency," Claudio said over the government-run National Broadcasting Network.

The merged Laban Ramos-CMD, headed by Mr. Arroyo, has been wooing De Castro to run in the 2010 elections in May 2010, but he has not made any commitment.

Aquino, 49, has had strong reservations against running for president until talk that he do so started to snowball. He now looks headed to being drafted by the administration's standard-bearer of the Liberal Party (LP).

Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II on Wednesday announced that he was making way for Aquino's candidacy.

Doing own discernment

Claudio, secretary general of the administration coalition, said party officials understood well why De Castro had taken this long to decide whether to run: the highest post in the land.

"Vice President Noli de Castro is doing his own discernment, his own careful consideration of the entire situation, and we still give that to him," he said.

Claudio reiterated that De Castro had his own "sense of expediency timing." (For that, standard for him as when he ran for the Senate, and later on, for vice president in 2004.

"He has his own political instincts that have served him well in the past. This timing is very important," he said.

But that period of discernment for De Castro could end soon.

"We expect his decision on or least joining the party and the [consolidation and rebellion] process anytime now," Claudio later said last week on the business.

Before Sept. 15

According to Claudio, De Castro's decision "would be clear" before Sept. 15.

"Many of our party mates are encouraged by his acknowledgment of Lakas-Kampi-CMD as the strongest political machinery for the 2010 election if he decides to run," he said when asked about the slightest hint from De Castro that he was keen on running and under the coalition.

While his ratings have dipped in recent poll surveys partly owing to his silence on his plans and lack of TV ads, De Castro would still have ample time to peak before the May 2010 elections, Claudio said.

"It will be more dangerous for a candidate to declare early. We have a long way to go, and it's better to have a fresh start, and then gain momentum at the right time," he said.

The coalition is also eyeing Jejomar Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Chair Royal Firmado of Davao Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's daughter, as standard-bearer. Both have been mentioned in the polls.

Not bothered by LP pair

Teodoro, meanwhile, said he wasn't the least bit threatened by an Aquino-Roxas tandem in the 2010 elections.

"Hope (I am not bothered). Because, for me, what (ruling coalition) Lakas does is what's important to me," Teodoro told reporters yesterday.

He said he was still working for the nomination of an administration standard-bearer.

He said he would respect the decision of the ruling party on its standard-bearer.

"On my part, if I was chosen by my party, by OK with me. Now, who chose is chosen, that would it—he OK with me," he said.

If he was not chosen by the ruling coalition, Teodoro said he would still have "many options."

Ruling party faces threats of desertion

From page A1

ing you before you ride the train," you have to know the destination. "I don't want to be floating on the sea for so long without a paddle," she said after the Senate forum in Quezon City.

De Castro, Teodoro, Fernando

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has said that Lakas-Kampi-CMD will choose its standard-bearer this month.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier said Vice President Noli de Castro had the makings of a good president, but he seems not to be too inclined to join the party.

Also aspiring to be the ruling party's standard-bearer are Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

The pressure for the administration party to name its presidential candidate has mounted after Sen. Mar Roxas, president of the Liberal Party, announced on Tuesday that he was set to forgo making his fight-or-office of the head to give way to Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

Noynoy, the only son of martyred opposition Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. and his widow, the late President Corazon Aquino, is expected to become the standard-bearer of the Liberal Party-led opposition coalition Kalb-ram after the death of his mother on Aug. 1 and the commemoration of his father's death anniversary on Aug. 21.

Other presidential aspirants include senator Jinggoy Estrada, Manuel "Lito" Lapid, Vice President Jejomar Binay and former President Joseph Estrada.

Getting impatient

Aam Cort Lakas-Kampi member Rep. Eduardo Rep. Antonio Alcover, said many leaders were getting impatient to know the party's standard-bearer.

"It's causing anxiety among the members," he said in a phone interview.

Alcover said the party must announce its candidate for president soon so that party members would be able to focus their efforts for next year's elections.

Without knowing the standard-bearer, the members could not completely back strategies for 2010, he said.

Alcover said things seemed to be moving but, and pretty soon it would be the campaigning period.

Very quiet

At this point, Lakas-Kampi-CMD is "very quiet" and even Alcover did not know what is happening, according to Magsaysay.

The last time the party met was during the announcement of a merger of Lakas-CMD and Kampi in May, a move being questioned by former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., Lakas-Kampi-CMD's founder, before the Commission on Elections.

"I don't blame other members if they are looking for other options," Magsaysay said.

But she said most members preferred to be loyal to the party if people from other groups were already talking to them for possible deals.

"We are waiting. They promised to (in September) they will make a decision. By (no. 1) if nothing is fixed, we have to be practical and fight our cause halfway," she said.

If the standard-bearer had been chosen earlier, members could have begun promoting him or her early at the grassroots level, according to Magsaysay.

"At this point in time, if you will only bell us in October who our standard-bearer will be, we might run out of time, especially if he's not in the Top 1 or Top 2 [standing in surveys]," she said.

Local candidates also have to campaign for themselves as well, she added.

Magsaysay said local officials needed to know the candidates for president so that they could fix alliances on the local level.

If they front-end their local candidates are ordered, but are expected to campaign for the president, she said.

"The national candidates would be sacrificed, not the local candidates, because you will push for your own will already to make sure you win. Maayos will push for themselves, councilors will push for themselves, he who she would want the first rubrics it comes in the national elections?" Magsaysay said.

Panlilio, Padaca to back Aquino bid for presidency

From page A1

ruling party has been leading in recent popularity surveys of a dozen presidential aspirants, was proceeding with his political plans.

Former President Joseph Estrada has said he is prepared to step down this year, but if the opposition could rally behind a common candidate, Estrada could bow out of the presidential polls, Panlilio said.

"It's not good to say that I will withdraw if all the others will withdraw as well," said Lacson, who called Estrada a "superdeal"—someone who could help avoid big post-accounting to join.

"If you pressed yourself as a leader, then you should take the first step for a unification move," Lacson said.

Reverend Estrada: "I'm not going to get unsolicited advice from anyone, especially from the person who caused the opposition disunity and delved in the 2004 elections."

The ousted President, who was convicted of plunder and subsequently pardoned by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, was referring to Lacson's abortive presidential bid.

Green recipe for unity

Jesus Sevilla "Sevi" Pobre, an environmentalist, said Lacson first announced plans to contest the presidency, and yesterday he actually chose to support Aquino.

"What the reformists suppose is for Noynoy to step out of 12 rule a large process involving nontraditional parties and movements into settling a future direction which could lead to a movement for nontraditional politics," he said.

"If Aquino wins the process, then it's possible we will support him," Pobre said.

"Noynoy is a very interesting man. It's difficult to characterize him. I don't think he's corrupt. I think he's honest. On the other hand, he has not demonstrated leadership. His track record is not evident where he stands on a range of issues, which is not his fault because he never intended to run."

Panlilio and Padaca are scheduled to formally announce their support for Aquino today at Club Filipino, according to the source close to the group.

They will be joined by Mayor Cito Mayor Jesse Robredo of the Liberal Party, who will also add his votes to those supporting Aquino, one of the late President Corazon C. Aquino and announcement Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

For ethical leadership

Panlilio, Padaca and Robredo are the founding members of the Kaya Natin! movement to guard good governance and ethical leadership, and it is in the spirit of putting a reform candidate in Malacañang that convinced them to support Aquino, according to the source.

Robredo said that he, Padaca and Panlilio were now considering other options, including running for the Senate to seek re-election.

Panlilio, a Catholic priest, is a first-term governor of Pangasinan while Senator Swedenborg Pobre, who famously ended the Dy family's stranglehold on Iloilo politics, is on his second term.

Mideol Mitra Japtain Mitra, president of the United Opposition (UNO), yesterday offered to negotiate with leaders of the various opposition groups so they could come up with a common candidate. He said he would start talking to Estrada and Aquino.

Mitra said that Aquino's emergence as "a probable president" was a breakthrough of the Liberal Party could result in political realignments and a likely unification with the ranks of the opposition parties."

Binay, was a Bilibid inmate lawyer and senior demonstrator before he was named mayor of Makati by Corazon Aquino after the 1986 People Power Revolution.

Cristina Aquino's death from cancer on Aug. 2 has sparked an outpouring of sympathy that supporters of her 46-year-old brother see hope to strengthen him votes in the upcoming balloting.

Only God knows outcome

Pangasinan Rep. Jose de Venecia Jr. said that the country's return to a two-party system was possible if the opposition would unify against the administration.

"Whether that will come about, only God knows. But what is important is that there are moves toward unification," he said.

De Venecia said that Aquino should sit down with friends and allies primordial presidential candidate to discuss how the opposition could unify.

Aquino's father was assassinated in 1983 on his return from three years of self-exile in the United States to rally the fractured opposition against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Moral force coalition

In Cabanatuan, supporters of Chief Justice Reynato Puno in Nueva Ecija yesterday launched a campaign to draft him as a presidential candidate of the Moral Force Coalition Movement.

"We believe that Chief Justice Puno has all the qualities of a good leader that can bring back the values of the morality and ethics in our government," said Lolita Abarcoson, presiding chair of the Moral Force Coalition Movement.

At least 50 core members of the movement signed a resolution promising support for Puno "for the sake of a much-needed change."

They also started accepting P5 from donors to fund the campaign. Report by Jovee Marie Chavez, TJ Burgonio, Michael Lim Ubac, Nestor L. Abad, Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Allison M. Lopez, Jovee Cabilo Salaz, Dyan Rose Bonifacio, Jaime Laude and Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Yolanda Sotelo, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Palace brands Noynoy retreat as 'gimmicky'

From page A1

presidential bid in the fifty-nine-hour.

Sen. Mar Roxas, reported by many as the Liberal Party's presidential bet, stepped aside on Tuesday after Aquino said that that he, too, wanted to run for president.

With his place in the Liberal Party's standard-bearer all but secured, Aquino backed away from the race and said he would go through a period of "discernment" before taking the challenge.

He said his decision is not—a foregone conclusion, according to party stalwarts—could not be made public until after the commemoration of the death of his mother, an icon of democracy in Asia.

Aquino flew yesterday to Davao City to confer with his mother's political allies and later in the afternoon proceeded to Zamboanga City en route to Cotabato to console the kin of Governor Andal Ampatuan Jr.

The senator met with Bro. Eliseo Rodrigo Dayoro and businessman Jesse Ayala, who he said encouraged him to go on with the fight.

"I told him that I am in the process of making my decision and that I will duly inform him whatever decision I will make," Aquino said in a press conference at Apalit's residence.

SEEN DEMIGHT: "Noynoy" Aquino III poses with relatively friends—Davao lawyer-man Jesse Ayala and wife Fe—during his visit to Davao City on Thursday.

Concerned about sisters

Aquino said he did not have to his decision, would be, it would "take into consideration the sisters' feelings and concerns. "I am normally divided and my children are divided," he said.

He said he never thought about running for the highest office in the land but that there were more supportive urging to do so.

In his meetings with Bro. Aquino said he repeatedly told him that the "torch has been passed" from his father, the slain opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino Jr., then to his mother and then to him.

Aquino said he told Bro. that there is a way to pass the torch to someone who is prepared.

But Bro. only told that this seemed farfetched, adding that "this can be channeled or are tried to advance the cause to make it happen rather than die."

He added that no

weigh the pastor good," Aquino quoted Bro. as saying.

In Zamboanga City yesterday afternoon, Aquino told reporters that he will meet with Archbishop Angel Lagdameo for advice and perspective in resolving political and personal problems.

"He is a family friend and like a mentor," he said. "He will...other wisdom."

Asking God for light

"It is good that Noynoy goes on retreat before he decides whether to run or not," said Msgr. Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

"He is asking God for light. I will pray for him. Noynoy is not pushing himself too much. He wants to weigh the pros and cons," he told the Church-run Radio Veritas yesterday.

"It was basic for Mar to sacrifice his ambition for the sake of the country. It is a commendable act. I pray the people is exercising this. May it guide to generous self-sacrifice. Both Noynoy and Mar are admirable in this regard," Lagdameo said.

In a separate interview over radio Veritas, Msgr. Bishop Bernardo Oliveros said he will also prayerfully ask the presidential aspirants to follow Jesus' example so that the opposition would have a common candidate.

Gutierrez said he believed that the country needed a second leader and said he personally knew that Senator Aquino was not a corrupt public official.

"From what I personally know, his family is honest and I think the children were brought up in honesty that's why. I have not heard any issue of corruption against Noynoy. Maybe he would be a very good (one) to combat corruption because the leader is not corrupt," he said.

Moral leader needed

"The other virtues say that he lacked skills and management, that is not the problem. You get all the best minds that you have. What we need is a moral leader, not an expert of economics," Gutierrez said.

Dumpaguo Archbishop Felimon Sotorio, however, said he preferred that Aquino concentrate on his candidacy as vice president.

"Heroism is good but he lacks the maturity, characteristics and charisma of his parents. He is not yet ripe for the highest position in the land," he said. With reports from Jovee Z. Pazzibugan and Michael Lim Ubac, Judy Aquino and Dyan Rose Bonifacio, Inquirer Mindanao

New weigh-in slated for Sansosa WBO title bid

SPORTS

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Pinoy rowers pluck 2 golds

THE PHILIPPINES WON TWO GOLD MEDALS at the 9th International Dragon Boat Racing Championships held in the Czech Republic last week.

The Department of Foreign Affairs, quoting a report from Philippine Ambassador to the Czech Republic Regina Jorge Santamaria, said yesterday that the RP team won in the 200-meter premier open and mixed categories during the competitions held Aug. 26 to 31 at the Slapy Regatta Course.

The Filipino rowers competed against squads from 22 countries, including China, the United States, Canada and Germany.

The RP team also picked up a silver in the 500m premier open and placed fourth in both the 500m premier mixed and 1,000m open.

In rating the 200m premier, the RP team clinched 40.822 seconds. Cynthia B. Balana

IBF light flyweight champion Brian Viloria and girlfriend Erica Navarro arrive at the NAIA yesterday to celebrate his recent victory over Puerto Rican challenger Jesus Soto Soto with Filipino fans. The Pi-Oen boxers or "Hawaiian Pundit" is scheduled to join fellow world champions Manny Pacquiao and Nonito Donaire in a press conference today at Crown Plaza hotel on Ortigas Avenue, Pasig. ARNEL MANGUIAT

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Bata, Django gain World Cup last 8

By Cedell P. Tajon

SENTIMENTAL FAVORITES EDRIS "BABY EDYE AND FRANCISCO "Django" Tantoaman of the Philippines headed an even greater start to knock out Italy's Fabio Polverel and Bruno Mandrel, 8-5, and advance to the quarterfinals of the PartyCasino.Net World Cup of Pool at the SM City North Annex in Quezon City last night.

With Reyes for four his best, Bataan native bided for the 10-8 team early on before getting help from a scratch call by Filipino referee Caloy Lopez, who slapped a foul on Mandrel because the "hair on his left arm" touched the green 6 while shooting the orange 5 in the 13th rack.

The call helped put the Filipinos on the hill, 7-4. A dry break by Reyes in the next rack allowed the Italians to eat the lead, 5-7, but Mandrel scratched on his break in the 20th rack, allowing the Filipino legends to clean up the rack.

"He's waiting for me to play well," said Bustamante, who hit a trademark bank shot on the 9-ball to give the Filipinos their first lead in the third rack. "I'm also waiting for him to play well."

The Filipinos will soon battle the winner of the Spain-England match for a place in the semifinals.

After cruising into the last eight win the defending champion team of Americans Rodney Morris and Shane Van Boening, who trounced Indonesians Muhammad Reed Sinaga/Jessie and Muhammad Zaddik, 8-3.

The Americans will next play the winner between 2007 champion China and Finland, honored by former world 9-ball champ Mika Immonen.

The other RP pair of Dennis Orcollo and Ronnie Alcano struggled before advancing to the Round of 16 last Wednesday night. They bested Thailands Warlito Kongkaew and Sunsdorp Phuwadalung, 8-3, in an escape a duel with the youthful Russian pair of 17-year-old Ruslan Chinshilov and Konstantin Stepanov, 2?.

The Russians beat Denmark, 8-3.

In other matches, Chinese Taipei downed Singapore, 8-6, and the Netherlands routed Vietnam, 8-3.

Coca-Cola gets veteran SLR big man Espino

By Pluto B. Cardilla

THERE'S ANOTHER BIG MAN—WITH a real big name—that is the big news in the PBA today.

Dennis Espino, a hard-nosed 6-foot-6 center wearing the unit of his career, will have a new home at Coca-Cola when the league's 35th season opens next month after he was shipped by Sta. Lucia to the Tigers in a deal announced yesterday.

Coca-Cola gave up second-rite forward Jason Misolas and future draft rights in exchange for the former national player and Mythical Team member, who will be playing for just the second team in his 14-year career.

"We've got Jason (Misolas) with a heavy heart," coach Kennedy Hernandez told the reporters over the phone. "He was one of the hardest working players we have here."

Espino, a good friend of Duremdes, rejoined the league in 1993 and spent his entire career with the Floridans.

His 14-year stint with the Realtors was the longest by any active player in the league for one team. In 608 games with Sta. Lucia, the native of Angeles City averaged 13.9 points, 6.8 rebounds and two boxs.

Archers slip past Tigers, stay alive

By Jeanne W. Paya

JAMBO MANILA—Ian Sangalang is a sight to behold. With 05.7 seconds to fill, La Salle is at 68-64 division of University of Santo Tomas that kept the Green Archers' Final Four bid alive in the UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday in the Araneta Coliseum.

"We're still alive and kicking," said coach Franz Pumaren, whose Archers came within seconds of dropping out of semifinal contention.

"I know it's a hard task, but it's still doable. I know we're still dependent on [the results of the] other teams, so we must win our remaining games."

UP-NU Tong of UST is harassed by La Salle's Kevin Bringas and Samuel Munoz. ALEX BALTAZAR

The Archers, who came into the game with shaven heads —as a "sign of solidarity," according to some players— snapped a five-game losing skid for a 5-7 record, just a game behind the 6-6 duos of the No. 4 Tigers.

La Salle and UST remained the only contenders for the last Final Four slot as the University of the East clinched the third semifinal berth after downing the University of the Philippines, 91-73, in the first game.

Red Lee notched a game-high 21 points, including a key three-point play that stood after pressure on the Maroons, 70-71, with only a minute left.

"It's an important win because we still have a chance to claim the rights to final advantage," said coach Laurence Chongson after the Maroons

Tong to 8-4.

The scores:

UP (B. Yu-Lee 21, Arula 7, Espino 9, Dyke 5, Pingoy 5, Ramos 11, Ramirez 2, Ramos 2, Ramos 2, Ramos

SBC, JRU favored over foes today

By Cedelf P. Tipon

SAN BEDA AND JOSE Rizal U aim to retain their lofty rankings when they take on separate rivals today in the 85th NCAA basketball tournament at the FilOil Flying V Arena in San Juan.

The Lions, seeking a fourth straight title, go for their 11th straight victory and 12th overall against Perpetual Help at 2 p.m.

The Bombers hope to repeat their first-round antagonist Arellano U at 4 p.m.

While the Lions are desperately trying to keep up with the second-seeding pace of league-leading San Sebastian, the Altas are on the brink of retaining a third-four slot for the fourth straight year with a 3-3 card.

"We will not let up, we will remain aggressive," said San Beda coach Frankie Lim, whose squad is coming off a 113-75 demolition of Arellano University Tamaraws last Monday.

The Chiefs, running fifth with a 7-3 record, proved formidable in their first-round meeting with the Bombers before yielding, 80-68, last July 15.

The game is still in the mind of JRU coach Aric Olivarez.

"It's a game we nearly lost, how could we forget," said Olivarez, noting the performance of "Little Chief" Leo Avenido, who fire-aided with 19 points in that game.

"He is the biggest reason we had a hard time against them," said Olivarez.

Alora bags gold in Korean Open

SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES CHAMPION Elaine Alora captured a gold medal while upcoming Carlo Alora bagged a bronze at the recent Korean Open taekwondo championships in Seoul.

The 19-year-old Alora beat a Chinese Taipei fighter in the finals of the middleweight division while Alora bested another Taiwanese to secure the bronze in the featherweight class.

The Filipinos also amassed five gold, four silver and five bronze medals in the junior competition aside from retaining top overall champion in the poomsae division over Thailand and Singapore.

Head coach Shirley Serrano said the Korean Open served as major highlight of the 21-day training in South Korea by a 50-man RP team made up of senior, junior and poomsae list.

The next target of the Filipinos is the world championship in Denmark slated Oct. 14 to 19 where the country will be fielding teams of its male and six female list.

The team is also hoping to improve its single-overall output in the 2007 Thailand Southeast Asian Games in the coming Laos SEA Games. Mary Anthony Reyes

Venus, Rafa, Roger through

NEW YORK—ALL EYES WERE ON TWO of the most famous pairs of knees in tennis on Wednesday as Rafael Nadal and Venus Williams were back doing what they do best at the US Open—embarrassing their opponents.

As the cameras zoomed in on their swollen joints, with both former world No. 1s struggling with tendinitis in recent months, Williams skipped into round three with a 6-3, 6-2 rout over 68-low American Bethanie Mattek-Sands.

Less than two hours later, a marvelous Nadal subjected an unfortunate Richael Gasquet, who was making his own comeback following a doping ban, to a 6-2, 6-2, 6-3 first-round mauling.

The grand slam stage, however, became a poster place for Wednesday when Maria Sharapova walked out of Washington Monument—which he likened to a "tent"—for the last time.

Never again will spectators at the four majors march a glimpse of the brilliant or entertaining antics of Sharapova after the 2000 champion bowed out in the first round following a 1-6, 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 defeat by fourteen-Juergen Melzer.

Former world No. 1 Amelie Mauresmo was unseen if she too would retire next year after she was thumped, 6-4, 6-0, by Canadian Aleksandra Wozniak.

Gasquet, more than 12years younger played a forgettable day for the French when she lost 1-6th seed Marion Bartoli, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2.

Fourth No. 1 Roger Federer whipped German Simon Greul and forged a clash with Australian Lleyton Hewitt.

Greul penalized Federer with a few jitters but could not prevent the Swiss benchmarking up a 6-3, 7-5, 7-5 win.

Hewitt's fodder and No. 2 Serena Williams closed the night by disrupting Hungary's Melinda Czink, 6-1, 6-1.

Indian Sania Mirza was on the receiving end of a 6-0, 6-0 drubbing by Italian 10th seed Flavia Pennetta. Reuters

VENUS Williams has very hot knees during a change over.

JOAN Tipon scores last one before getting a scare from Ric Ed Lachao Inc.

Tipon rises; Ladon sinks

Suarez, Tañamor open world bid

By Recah Trinidad

MILAN—BANTAMWEIGHT JOAN TIPON labored past an underrated Ric Ladano, 8-6, but lightweight Aeqjie Ladon was reduced to a punching target by his unbully fellow Kapilvin Inc. hosting Team Philippines with a 3-1 win-loss slate in the XV World Amateur Boxing Championships here Wednesday.

Featherweight Chesly Suarez won in square off with a Romanian Thursday before light flyweight Harry Tañamor gave up against a round Armenian on Friday to complete the preliminary assignments for the five-man RP team in this tough, exacting tournament among the world's finest amateur boxers.

An expected easy bout against Kamal Gamboa-Ibrahim of Sri Lanka, a foe he had bested in training five years ago, turned into a surprise theater after the 27-year-old Tipon figured in a clumsy, unintuitive start.

The bout was closer than the final 8-1 score indicated.

A low connection—right straight to the face—gave Tipon the first round.

But the score stood at 2-all midway in the second as Tipon, stiff and indecisive, failed to penetrate the defense of his hunched and body foe.

Another straight in the face before the bell made it 3-2, at end of the second, but Tipon, supposed to be on a upper comeback, had to prove everything in an explosive finish in order to claim triumph.

Aeqjie Ladon of Iligan City, on the other hand, ran much into a brick wall in a losing effort against Thomas Dulloy a surgy and crafty Bagbaluan, who easily prevailed, 11-6.

Try hard as he did, Ladon was left passing the air in a desperate chase for Dulloy, who boasted at least four inches taller than him.

It would have been a dressed win for Ladon. The Bagbaluan was penalized for repeatedly hitting with open gloves, thus costing the score an 8-2, to the second round.

If it's any consolation, Dulloy, up 11-3 in the third, visibly dropped his guard in the dying seconds of the final round and allowed Ladon a couple of points for the final count.

Ladon wasn't the biggest disappointment for personified the futility of fielding short Filipino pugs to campaign past the featherweight class.

Tipon blamed his shoulders which, he said, finally loosened up only in the final round.

"Mashirap maupuntik ang balikat ko sa umpisa (My shoulders were tight at the start)," Tipon told the reporters.

Tipon said he nonetheless relaxed when he beat Ricardo Espinosa in Baguio in 2005, won double dump and strong one at the Mediterranean Games in Wednesday.

He promised a more solid round in his next bout on Saturday, but that would be easier said than done.

Tipon sees Ilgiaz Ozmali Abdelkadim, an Algerian punching machine who rarely blamed his opponents through the two of the ring.

Light welterweight Dominic Mandap scored the first win for the Filipinos with a 5-1 triumph over Pakistani's Aamir Khan Tuesday.

'Where's Pacquiao? Is he very rich?'

By Recah Trinidad

MILAN—JOSEPH LADON'S HAPLESS stand against Englishman Thomas Stalker on Wednesday has contributed to a stronger longing for Manny Pacquiao among Filipino sentient here.

They continued to ask about Pacquiao, with some ignorantly wondering why the boxing superhero not out fighting for his country here.

The tournamentwas involves the finest fighters in the world but the Pacquiao, reportedly the planet's best boxer, cannot compete because this is solely for amateur boxers.

Of course, there's a chance of Pacquiao boxing for the RP team if the World Championships of Boxing succeeds with an international meet between both camps and sanctioned by AIBA.

"They have invited us to join and field a team," said Ricky Vargas, president of the amateur Boxing of the Philippines (Abap) and top executive at Mawi Philippines, whose Smart Piston is bankrolling the RP team here in partnership with the Philippine Sports Commission.

Anyway, the meeting for Olympian here because more pronounced following Ladon's loss on Wednesday.

Vargas sports scribe Joe Antonio of the People's Journal said he was besieged here by other delegation members who wanted to know more about Pacquiao.

"He is running for president," Antonio quoted a Venezuelan guy as asking.

"Pacquiao is also very popular in Georgia, is he very rich one?" a man official from the former Russian republic asked.

Antonio said he expects more questions about Pacquiao at the Dinome commercial area, where Filipinos roam on their off days.

JAYLEN throw action in last year's Lipa Olympics.

Milo Little Olympics unfold

THE 32ND MILO LITTLE OLYMPICS begin today with thousands of young athletes competing simultaneously in Manila and Cebu.

Last year's edition drew a total of 20,000 athletes from 800 schools and these numbers are likely to be surpassed in the games confined to elementary and high school students.

Scheduled in the Cebu and Manila legs, both ending Sunday are athletics, badminton, chess, football, gymnastics, lawn tennis, swimming, squid takraw, table tennis, taekwondo and volleyball.

Caspian de Oro and Pangasinan elite their turn to host the Little Olympics next Sept. 11 to 13.

The Little Olympics have become an integral part of the sports programs of schools not affiliated with either the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP).

Apart from today's events, Cebu City will also host the first-ever National Milo Little Olympics on Oct. 20.

Sta. Lucia golf tour fires off

LAOAG—TWO HUNDRED PLAYERS LAUNCH their campaign to deliver the big points for their respective home clubs as the 13th season of the Sta. Lucia Golf Tour tees off today at the Rancho Pidal Marina Golf and Country Club.

Players from a hundred pairs in various handicap and age brackets in the 36-hole tournament, the first of four stages slated to four top courses in Luzon, Thaiyan and Mindanao.

The series for Club of the Year honors between nine teams, featuring newcomer Beverly Place, in three rounds of tournaments.

Eagle Ridge of Cavite and Alta Vista of Cebu, were duke when Cavite won a combined record titles disputed, are out to diminish more in the circuit for members of clubs developed by real estate giant Sta. Lucia.

Rancho Pidal Verde, Cavite a winner of five overall title in 2004 and 2005 and Mayan Tagaytay are also among the tour favorites.

The other teams are Orchard of Cavite, Summit Drive of Batangas (3-4) and Lakewood of Cabanatuan City Lake Calamba Springs of Laguna and Beverly Place of Pampanga.

"We've come a long way since our first edition in 2000. The Tour has survived the test of time," said the Tour's executive committee officials Vicente Santos and engineer Wilson Goh.

Liga caging: Buddies upend Stallions

ANGELES CITY—HOST SWARTDOMINGA Buddies shocked the Tonyo Laguna Stallions, 79-75, as the start of the Smart Liga Filipina Conference III Barangay Liga Wednesday night at the Holy Angel University Gym.

Nino Gelig registered for the Buddies of coach Allan Gregorio with 14 points while Ng. coach Al Magpantay and Chalked Anne supported him with 13 each.

In the first game, Forward Tigerg vaulted to the top of the Liga Boss standings with a 79-70 win over the Tecnia Bamboo Techno.

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay 'Showdown' derby today

MORE THAN 100 FOOTBALL DEITIES ROSTER in the long-running Dimahawa's Dugo Derby attack gets spring today at the Pasay City Football Complex.

Gamefowl breeders from Laguna, Batangas, Cavite, Quezon, Rizal, Bulacan and Pangasinan are banking their raised fighting cocks, according to host Danny Ty.

The champion will share in the guaranteed prize of P400,000.

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DID YOU KNOW

COLEGIO de San Juan de Letran started out in the 17th century as the Santa Potenciana and Paul School for Orphan Boys under the Dominicans.

Cyril Almendrala Inquirer Research

Docs' group suspends Hayden Kho

By Alliver M. Lopez

THE PHILIPPINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION (PMA) has suspended Dr. Hayden Kho Jr. for a year for "conduct offensive to the profession," his lawyer, Lorna Kapunan, told the Inquirer yesterday.

In an interview during the launching of White Ribbon Day—a campaign launched by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem) to prevent violence against women—Kapunan said she and Kho learned about the group's decision on Wednesday.

"We were called to a hearing on Sept. 3 by the PMA which committee to inform us of their decision to suspend my client's membership for one year," she later elaborated in a text message to the Inquirer.

Kapunan added, "My client respects the decision."

She was relieved by Kho himself who said he would not contest PMA's decision.

"I respect their decision ... I'm happy with whatever is given to me. I'm actually ready for anything," he said.

Kho was with Kapunan at the launching of the "White Ribbon Day" campaign. He

BACK PAGE

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UNITED Nations Development Fund For Women (Unifem) Trustee Atty. Lorna Kapunan, RP's Simeon Marcelo, Unifem president Kathleen Liu-Gutierrez, Honduras consulate on women CEO Irmen Santiago and Unifem chair Georgina Puyat at the launch of "Wear Ribbon" Campaign at Max's restaurant in Makati City Thursday. JAY GALVEZ PEREGRINO

'Chavit' told: Infidelity no excuse for beating partner

By Leila B. Salaverria and Allison W. Lopez

INFIDELITY IS NO EXCUSE for breaking up your partner, a congresswoman yesterday told Deputy National Security Adviser Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Gabriela party list Rep. Liza Maza said any form of violence against women and children was against the law and Singson's actions were all the more despicable because he was a public official.

On Wednesday, Singson's live-in partner, Cha Scognamus, told reporters he has five children—four of whom are under his wife Imelda's legal custody.

In an interview with reporters, the former Ilocos Sur governor admitted that he "beat" Tiongson after he caught her with another man in their apartment.

Singson said this was the second time that he caught Tiongson with another man.

He added that he believed Tiongson filed the case just to get more money from him.

According to Maza, Singson's statements could make him criminally liable for violating the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children act.

She lamented the fact that some men consider women as their property, a mind set that could led to abuse.

Maza expressed support for Tiongson and lauded the latter for her courage in asserting her rights and for coming out to file a criminal complaint against Singson.

Meanwhile, Bitoy's view was seconded by lawyer Lorna Kapunan who said Singson should not use his live-in partner's alleged unfaithfulness as a reason for beating her up.

"Violence is never justified at all. And violence is not only physical violence. It could also be) emotional, psychological and even economic violence," Kapunan said at the launch of the "White Ribbon" campaign, which is aimed at involving men on the fight to prevent violence against women.

The campaign, spearheaded by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem), also called on men to wear white ribbons to show that they do not condone abusive behavior toward women.

"This is not to say support of any presidential candidate. This is in support of men wearing a white ribbon. This is a personal pledge to always speak out against violence toward women ... It is the men now who have to be educated [on] nonviolence," Kapunan, who is Unifem's legal counsel, said. They assumed to make the Philippines the first Asian country to launch the campaign.

METROBRIEFS

UN-led confab on environment

ANTIPOLO—INTERNATIONAL conference on the environment sponsored by the United Nations will be held in Manila Sept. 8-11. The International Conference on Green Industry in Asia (ICGIA) will be held at the Philippine International Convention Center. More than 1,000 delegates from at least 24 countries are expected to attend the event. The gathering is organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) together with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the UN Environment Programme. Starting the conference, the Philippine government, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and the private sector will report on the gains achieved in ensuring environmental sustainability and ensuring a safe world. Environment Secretary Jose Atienza Jr. , who heads the organizing committee for ICGIA, said also when the country's gains in the efforts to save the environment.

Tagaig nutrition program cited

FOR THE SECOND time in two years, Taguig City has won the Green Banner Award after being adjudged by the National Nutrition Council (NNC) as a city having the best managed nutrition action plan in Metro Manila. The NNC, which is under the Department of Health, annually holds the Nutrition Awards, recognizing local government units and social workers in the effective implementation of nutrition programs. This year's awarding ceremonies will be held on Sept. 11 at the Blue Leaf Events Pavilion in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig.

Nikko Collondres Calleja

Ukrainian kidnapped, robbed

ARMED MEN wearing police uniforms abducted and robbed a Ukrainian national who arrived on Wednesday night to attend the anniversary of the "Kingdom of Jesus Christ" religious group in Davao City. The victim, identified as Nabeil Bashovsky, a lawyer, told police that he arrived around 8:45 at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and was fetched by two members of the religious group. They were traversing Roxas Boulevard on board a blue Nissan Frontier van when a white Toyota Revo blocked their path around 7 p.m. Three armed men got off the Revo and forced Bashovsky inside the van and the driver off. The victim said the robbers took his laptop, iPad, cell phone and ATM and credit cards before dropping him off. They then gave him P500 so he could take a taxi back to the airport.

Nikko Collondres Calleja

3 men behind C-5 stone-throwing cases held

By Nina Catherine Calleja

THREE SUSPECTED THUGS WHO PREY on Indian nationals engaged in the money lending business have been arrested in Taguig City, the police said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Camilo Cascolan, city police chief, identified the three as Jerry Obaldon, 34; Arthur Aragon, 24; and Sonny Abrares, 30.

The three men, all residents of Taguig City, were also reportedly involved in throwing stones at motorists on C-5 Road and their robbing them, Cascolan said.

According to Cascolan, a team composed of operatives of the Intelligence Special Operations Unit and Taguig Mobile Patrol Group arrested the three men on Commonwealth, C-5 Road, on Wednesday afternoon.

Police recovered 20 old receivers from Obaldon and Abrares and a knife from Aragon.

Cascolan said the three were believed to be behind several robbery holdup incidents involving Indian nationals. Their latest victim was identified as Inder Singh, who was robbed at gunpoint in Bella Village, Taguig.

A background check of the three men showed that Obaldon was facing a string of robbery hold-up cases and drug-related charges.

Charges have been filed against the three men at the Taguig prosecutor's office, Cascolan said.

'Dugo Dugo' bleeds new victim

A PHILIPPINE LOST AL- most P500,000 worth of cash and valuables to suspected "Dugo Dugo" gang members who called up her housemaid and claimed that the former was injured in an accident.

Insp. Edgardo Tungcia, chief of the theft and robbery investigation section of the Quezon City Police District, identified the victim as Dr. Phoebe Sebe, 52, a resident of Marie Village in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Tungcia said the victim reported that the lost earrings worth P300,000, three watches worth P150,000 and P20,000 in cash. Police said a man and a woman called up the victim's maid, Irene Pelicia, and told her her employer needed money because she was hurt in an accident. **Nancy C. Carvajal**

Doctors' group . . .

From page A15

even had a white ribbon pinned on his shirt.

"This is one way of saying that I support the fight on violence against women. Attorney Kapunan has been lecturing me and reading to me about things about women and women's rights ... I'm following her advice," he told reporters.

The PMA started investigating Ob after **actress Katrina Halili asked the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)** to revoke Ob's license and ban him from practicing medicine, saying he was a disgrace to the medical profession.

This was after videos of her having sex with Ob were leaked on the Internet.

PRC has yet to decide on Halili's complaint. Rayanni, meanwhile, said PMA has recommended that the PRC mete out the same penalty to Ob.

Dr. Santiago del Rosario, PMA executive on ethics and medical practice chair, said the decision that the group initially wanted to expel Ob as a member due to the controversy generated by the sex videos which featured him not only with Halili, but with several other women.

"By his act of remorse and atonement and his promise to go on medical relations, we decided on a one-year suspension," Del Rosario said.

Ob's suspension from PMA, however, does not prohibit him from practicing medicine since only PRC has the power to suspend or revoke a doctor's license.

BDO

PHILIPPINE UNIVERSAL BANK INCORPORATED NOTES
ELIGIBLE AS LOWER TIER 2 CAPITAL

NOTICE OF NOTEHOLDERS' MEETING

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Noteholders of Banco De Oro Unibank, Inc.'s (BDO) Unsecured Subordinated Notes Qualifying as Lower Tier 2 Capital issued on November 21, 2007 (Series 1), May 30, 2008 (Series 2) and March 30, 2009 (Series 3) (collectively, the "Tier 2 Notes") has been scheduled at 11:00 a.m. on September 16, 2009 at the Open Area, Sign of the Arch, 8th Floor South Tower, BDO Corporate Center, 7899 Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Among the matters to be taken up includes the election of a successor - Public Trustee of the Tier 2 Notes in view of the resignation of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited - Manila Trust Department (HSBC - Trust) to take effect on December 31, 2009 in accordance with the Trust Agreements for the Tier 2 Notes.

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WORLD BRIEFS

Pfizer to pay $2.3 billion

NEW YORK (AP)—Pfizer Inc. agreed on Wednesday to plead guilty to a US criminal charge relating to promotion of its once-world-known Celebrex pain medicine and will pay a record $2.3 billion to settle allegations it improperly marketed 13 medicines. The world's biggest drug maker was slapped with the huge fines by the US government after being deemed a repeat offender in pitching drugs to patients and doctors for unapproved uses. **Reuters**

School massacre plot

LONDON—Two British teenagers meticulously plotted "the greatest massacre ever," inspired by the Columbine killings in the United States, a prosecutor said as their trial opened. The two wrote up detailed plans for what they called "Project Rainbow," plotting to bomb a shopping complex before killing themselves and others at their school on the 10th anniversary of the April 1999 massacre in Colorado, according to the prosecutor in Wednesday's hearing. "We will invade into school and at the end of it no one will walk out alive," Rose Wolf, night, 16, wrote in his diary, according to prosecutors. It would, the teen wrote, be the "greatest massacre known." The defenses denies the charges but has not yet argued its case. **AP**

Madoff probes bungled

WASHINGTON—Flashing past dozens of "red flags," investigators at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) bungled their probes of Bernard Madoff on tactic that his multibillion-dollar fraud and only Bloomberg had he used the moment to cash in new investors, an agency watchdog declared on Wednesday. The report by the SEC inspector general shows that no smoking gun of corruption was found in the agency's conduct toward the disgraced financier. Instead, it painted a grim picture of an agency hobbled by incompetence—lacking in pursue the most obvious leads—that allowed the way for Madoff to continue what could be the biggest Ponzi scheme in US history for more than a decade. **AP**

Madoff books go bust

NEW YORK—Sex and scandal have not been enough to make super sellers out of books about Bernard Madoff. According to Nielsen BookScan, neither a movie-dramatized tell-all by alleged ex-mistress Sheryl Weinstein nor a tell-cast wave of biographies about the imprisoned financier have caught on with the public. Weinstein's "Madoff's Other Secret," a tabloid favorite published last month by St. Martin's Press, has sold just 2,000 copies. As of Wednesday night, it ranked No. 3,686 on Amazon.com. Jerry Oppenheimer's "Madoff With the Money" has sold 1,000 copies. Gerard and Deborah Strober's "Catastrophe" and Andrew Kirtzman's "Betrayal" each sold 3,000. Eric Arvedlund's "Too Good To Be True" has been slightly more successful, selling 5,000 copies. **AP**

New protest in Urumqi

BEIJING—Chinese residents protested ethnic-rioting public safety on Thursday in the western Chinese city of Urumqi where deadly ethnic rioting in July killed nearly 200 people. People living near the city center reported by telephone said hundreds, possibly thousands, of members of China's majority Han ethnic group had gathered downtown to denounce the regional government and demonstrating has said order in the city of 2.3 million. **AP**

Suu Kyi files appeal

RANGOON—Lawyers for detained opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi filed an appeal on Thursday against the criminal conviction that put her under house arrest for 18 more months. A district court in Burma (Myanmar) ruled on Aug. 11 that the 64-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate was guilty of violating the terms of her earlier detention after an uninvited American visitor stayed at her home. The court sentenced her to three years in prison with hard labor, but that was reduced to 18 months of house arrest by order of military junta chief Senior Gen. Than Shwe. **AP**

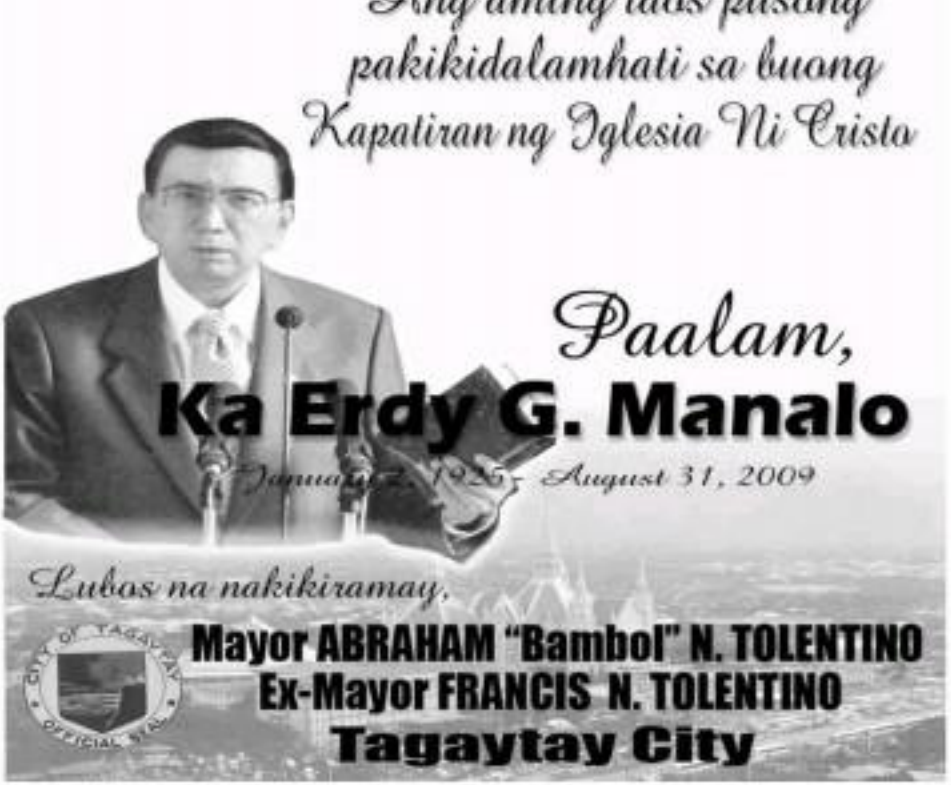
Sexual misconduct

WASHINGTON—A wide-ranging state department inquiry into allegations of lewd behavior and sexual misconduct among the private security contractors guarding the US Embassy in Afghanistan could lead to the termination of the company's $186 million contract, a department spokesperson said on Wednesday. The allegations made by an independent watchdog group describe "Lord of the Flies" conditions that include threats and intimidation and scenes of guards and supervisors in various stages of nudity at parties flowing with alcohol. **AP**

Regulating yogis

NEW YORK—US yogis are being asked to regulate more than their breathing—and they are fighting back. Almost 100 yogis gathered in New York recently to discuss hiring a lobbyist and raise funds to fight a state proposal to require certification of yoga teacher training programs—a move they say would unfairly cost them money. **Reuters**

Ang aming taos pusong pakikidalamhati sa buong Kapatiran ng Iglesia Ni Cristo



The WORLD

Lito Lorenz B. Eseo

46 dead, dozens missing in Indon quake

CIKANGKARUNG, INDONESIA—RESCUERS DUG through rocks and debris with their bare hands on Thursday in search of dozens of villagers believed buried in a landslide triggered by a strong Indonesian earthquake that killed at least 46 people and damaged thousands of buildings.

At least 110 people were hospitalized with injuries from the 7.3-magnitude quake just off the coast of densely populated Java island. Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Priyadi Kardono said, adding that 40 were in critical condition.

The earthquake on Wednesday afternoon caused destruction across West Java province, where more than 18,200 homes and offices were listed as damaged, around 9,000 of them severely. At least 5,300 people were housed into temporary shelters.

Some rural areas could not be reached by telephone and their may be more victims and damage, officials said.

Many of the deaths and injuries were caused by falling debris or collapsed walls and roofs.

In the village of Cikangkarung in Cianjur district, a landslide buried a row of homes under rows of rock and mud. At least 13 bodies were recovered, but the biggest story searching for dozens of people believed missing, Kardono said.

"Everything is gone, my wife, my old father-in-law and my house . . . now I just hope to find the bodies of my family," farmer Ahmad Sobana, 34, said as he paused at giant stones with a crowbar.

Heavy digging equipment had not reached the remote village, which President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was to visit here Thursday. Police, military personnel and villagers used their hands.

Muhtadi Ismunova, a district administrator, said 31 houses and a mosque were buried by the landslide and estimated that more than 50 people were trapped and feared dead.

"The chance of survival is so slim . . . but we have to find them," Ismutra said.

The prolonged shaking from the quake was felt hundreds of kilometers away on the neighboring resort island of Bali.

In the capital, Jakarta, 190 km northwest, thousands of panicked office workers flooded out of towering skyscrapers onto the streets, some of them screaming.

The Disaster Management Agency said at least 46 people were confirmed dead.

Dede Irawadi said her 9-year-old son, who was playing at a friend's house when the earthquake struck, was "buried under the rocks."

"I lost my son . . . now I just want to see his body. I want to bury my lovely son properly," she said, weeping. AP

A WOMAN and her two children gaze at the ruins of their home in West Java after Wednesday's 7.3-magnitude quake caused landslides across the province.

Gunmen kill 17 at drug rehab in Mexico

CIUDAD JUAREZ, MEXICO—Gunmen broke into a drug rehabilitation center and shot 17 people dead in a southern Mexican border city, an official said.

The attackers on Wednesday broke down the door of 15 Aztecas center in Ciudad Juarez, lined up their victims against a wall and opened fire, said Arturo Sandoval, a spokesperson for the regional prosecutors' office. At least five people were injured.

Authorities had no immediate suspects or information on the victims. Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso, Texas, is Mexico's most violent city, with at least 1,600 people killed in the past year. Most of the homicides are tied to drug gang violence.

Dozens of stabbing relatives rushed to the center to find out if their loved ones were among the dead. Soldiers and federal agents patrolled the streets surrounding the center in the Bellavista neighborhood.

President Felipe Calderon sent thousands more troops and federal police to Ciudad Juarez earlier this year, but the surge has done little to stem the raging violence. The city is home to the Juarez drug cartel, which is battling other gangs for trafficking and dealing turf.

The government is struggling to revamp Ciudad Juarez's police force, which is plagued by corruption and the assassination of many of its officers. Other police have quit the force out of fear of being targeted.

The massacre capped a particularly bloody day in Mexico's relentless drug war.

Gunmen killed the No. 2 security official and three other people in Calderon's home state of Michoacan, where the government is locked in an intermittent battle with the ruthless La Familia cartel, blamed for a string of assassinations of police and soldiers. AP

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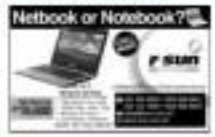
INQUIRER IN EDUCATION
bench/
José—Fly Reporter
A new serial story to promote literacy
To usher in International Literacy Day (Sept. 8), Inquirer in Education (IIE) will serialize a new story titled José—Fly Reporter every Monday from Sept. 7 to Oct. 26, 2009 in the Learning section.
José—Fly Reporter, written by Cathy Sewell, illustrated by Blaise Sewell and courtesy of World Association of Newspapers (Wan-Ifra), will take readers on an eight-part adventure where a group of insects hears about a threat to their city park and decides to create a newspaper to spread the word.
Each of the eight chapters comes with activities that parents and teachers may use with young readers to develop reading and writing skills as well as critical thinking. The story also invites children to learn more about the lives of insects and their threatened habitats.
For this new series, Bench is donating copies of the Inquirer for use by partner teachers in their classrooms at 16 grade schools:
Balanga Integrated School, Batasan Hills Elementary School, Bayanan Elementary School, Bonifacio Elementary School, Fairview Elementary School, Isaac Lopez Integrated School, Jose Magsaysay Elementary School, Kostka School of QC, Marikina Elementary School, Nellie E. Brown Elementary School, Nemesio I. Yabut Elementary School, New Cabalan Elementary School, Pinaglabanan Elementary School, St. Alphonsus Liguori Integrated School, Sto. Domingo Elementary School, and Tuloy Sa Don Bosco.
José—Fly Reporter is the third story in the IIE Serial Reading program to be sponsored by Bench.
Companies, groups and individuals interested to support this school advocacy may donate newspapers for the duration of the series. Please call PDI Corporate Affairs, Mundi Ocampo at 897-8808 loc. 259.

Why not the world?
– Iza Salonga
Learn to ask.
Be an Inquirer.
INQUIRER



Editor Raul D. Maredo • Assistant Editor Corita S. Narisma

BUSINESS

Gov't sets sale of ₱25B in retail bonds

Auction said to offset poor tax take of revenue agencies

By Reinel N. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT WILL AUCTION OFF ON SEPT. 15 at least P25 billion in retail treasury bonds to meet its budget needs.

National Treasurer Roberto B. Tan yesterday said the first issues would be in tenors of three, five and seven years.

Tan said the three- and five-year debt papers would each be worth P10 billion while the remaining P5 billion would be in seven-year instruments.

First time, he said, the total amount could still go up depending on demand from investors.

"We believe there is going to be good reception (for new RTBs)," Tan said.

RTBs will mark investment issuance of the low minimum denomination of P5,000.

While large companies and government-owned firms may also buy RTBs, government securities eligible dealers (GSEDs) are directed to privilege small investors.

The Philippines is facing a revised budget deficit this year.

The plan for the retail bond issuance was revived after months of indecision by the government as its revenues continued to slacken, with tax collection agencies unlikely to meet their targets this year.

The bond issue will be arranged by Philippine International Corp., BPI Capital Corp., BDO Capital, First Consolidated Banking Corp. and the Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.

GOVT B2

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Economy seen** to grow at a faster clip in Q4 /B5

■ **$6-B BPO sector** builds on early gains /B5

Globe Business launches ONEcall, the first virtual trunkline service in RP

Globe Business continues with its mission to innovate and come up with solutions that fit the needs of businesses with the launch of ONEcall, the first and only virtual trunkline service in the Philippines.

A specially designed office mobility solution for corporations and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), ONEcall enables people to collectively stay connected at anytime with just one landline number. Combining the functionality and power of a PBX phone system with the reach and flexibility of mobile phones, ONE Call transforms your existing Globe cell phone into a powerful business phone system—a virtual trunkline where all the extensions or local numbers are made up of mobile phones of your employees.

Upon subscription to the service, the company will get a ONEcall landline office number that connects the employees' mobile phones to an easy-to-use web-based switchboard which has all the features of a high end telephone system. When customers call the ONEcall number, they will either be routed to a customized recorded voice messages or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) or to a receptionist. Calls can then be transferred either to employees' cellphones or to call groups that the company has set up.

"Companies could dramatically boost customer service and their operations by routing incoming calls to the mobile phones of their employees or other intended recipients with ONEcall. More client needs can be addressed to immediately, which makes client servicing more efficient," Globe Business Head Gil Genio said.

This was confirmed by Globe Business Corporate and SME Segments Head Manny Algeda. "With ONEcall, the company's whole staff can stay accessible to clients with just one number to remember. And unlike traditional phone systems that demanded an upfront investment, ONEcall does not charge you or your company any hardware, software, cabling, or installation fees. Mamemaximize lang ito ng kinikita ng kumpanya," Algeda said.

For more information on Globe Business' ONEcall office phone system and get the seven-day free trial, please visit http://globe.com.ph/onecall. You may also call 730-1288, or email customersupport@globebusiness.com.ph for more details.

Globe Biz Forum 09:
keep business competitive during challenging times

SMEC plans to hold IPO

BHP Billiton investing in SC56

BHP BILLITON PTY LTD. IS EXPECTED TO infuse investments into Service Contract 56 in South Sulu Sea, following the approval by the Department of Energy of the assignment of a 30-percent interest to the world's largest integrated resources company.

In a statement, the DOE said Mitra Energy Philippines Ltd. had assigned half of its 58-percent interest in the service contract to BHP.

The remaining 30 percent is held by ExxonMobil Exploration and Production Philippines B.V., operator of SC56.

"It will bring BHP into the Philippine upstream sector.

The DOE said it was "very pleased that companies of this caliber and expertise recognize the potential of the Philippine oil and gas sector."

The SC56 consortium plans to begin the drilling of its first commitment well this month. This forms part of the service contract's third subphase of exploration works.

The exploration phase will be undertaken at no cost to the country with all risks borne by the contractors, ExxonMobil, Mitsubishi and BHPBilliton, the DOE said.

Exxon earlier said it had programmed as much as $100 million for exploration activities for this year alone. Amy R. Remo

San Miguel keeping 51% stake

By Amy R. Remo

SAN MIGUEL ENERGY CORP., the energy investment arm of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., will conduct an initial public offering (IPO) within three years.

San Miguel president Ramon S. Ang told reporters that the conglomerate would definitely keep a 51-percent interest in SMEC. The rest would be sold.

The proceeds from the planned offering will be used to fund the activities and work programs of the energy company, he said.

SMEC is currently in the think of expansion and renovation plans for its recently acquired power generation asset and independent power producer administrator (IPPA) contract.

It recently acquired the 620-megawatt Ilijan combined cycle power plant in Batangas, through a negotiated sale, from Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

Ang said SMEC planned to invest at least $350 million in converting the plant into a cogenerated natural gas (CNG)-fired facility. It is currently in talks with several CNG suppliers from Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar and Middle East.

While the energy sector, SMEC also bagged the contract to manage the independent power producer (IPP) contract for the 1,000-MW mini coal-fired power plant in Pangasinan, through a bidding held by PSALM.

Ang, however, was highlighted when asked if the company was keen on acquiring other state-owned power plants and IPP contracts.

In the meantime, Ang said San Miguel was focusing on its energy and power businesses, with the aim of increasing the contributions of its power and energy businesses to 25 percent of the parent firm's yearly earnings.

Earnings from its food business should now be about 10 to 20 percent of the total, while telecom should be 30 percent, Ang added.

"We seem to be the top consolidators, the most diversified and the biggest sales overseas," he said.

"For our power business, as much as possible, we want it to run on renewable energy. However, for the load (facility) which is coal-fired plant, the question is how to make it environmentally-friendly," Ang added.

Ripple debuts on PSE, shares up 3.4%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SHARE PRICE OF SOFTWARE developer Ripple 8 Business Interactional Inc. rose by 3.44 percent at the end of its first day of trading on the small and medium enterprises board of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Ripple, which raised about P20 million from the sale of 25.0 percent of its outstanding shares, listed its shares on the PSE under the symbol "RPL."

Its share price closed at P4.50 from the offer price of P4.27 a share on a style volume of 91,000 shares.

"The issue is too small. It didn't even create a ripple," said Joseph Sonza, president of Eagle Equities Inc.

Ripple was, nevertheless, the first company to brave the stock market this year.

"I'm hoping it's the start of an IPO trend in the Philippines on the back of the widely perceived economic recovery. The stock performed well in its debut in the market and if it sustains its performance, the message will ripple across the nation. And other companies planning an IPO will surely take their cue from this newly listed company," said PSE president Francis Giao.

Ripple plans to use the IPO proceeds for marketing and development of solutions for the pharmaceutical industry.

Ripple started commercial operations in 2002 and it operates, develops, manages and provides software solutions projects.

Market is suddenly tripping

MARKET RIDER

Dave Sonnera

SOME SORT OF A BRIEF/TIME market correction seems to be dragging the momentum of stock prices early this September, as trading veered away from positive local economic news in the last few days.

From where I sit, this seems to be influenced more by an upswing rider by the sizing of weak trading results now happening on Wall Street and the nearby China equity market.

To my mind, therefore, it is more technical than fundamental. Interestingly, the market takes it in the current game more to have the same mind like I do on the situation.

Halfway at week 13

All of them seem to display confidence in the overall outlook of the market. Everyone still maintains an open position but in varying degrees depending on the trading or investing strategy or model they are following.

QR Trader, though, is being more cautious. She is not leaving to chance the market gains she has seized so far. Whether the market is just on a short-term correction or could be already at the throes of a deeper market downturn, the fact is, it is right now moving sideways to downward—that is why she continues to lock the profits she realized last week.

With this move, she is unexpected to one mark away from grabbing the title of Monero Uno in the virtual contest halfway of week 13 at 111.61-percent ROI (return on investment), tied in she retained to have regained 3, her remaining investment portfolio suffered a loss of 0.20 percentage point only as the market slipped.

Trader10 is a more interesting study. She actually posted 38 trading orders during the first three days of the week—the most number posted ever in the trading contest—and got all orders done except for two.

Despite loading up more stocks as the market tripped, her investment portfolio managed to grow, though considerably small. The point is that, you could actually hack the most well-timed stock picks. This is because stock prices flux within a certain bandwidth along the major market trend lines.

Take the case of Pepsi Cola Products Philippines Inc. (PIP) and Alliance Tuna International Inc. (Tuna), the market is down but they continue to perform.

To digress, this trading band is where traders make a living. And the overall trading trend of the market is where investors and traders alike earn more for financial freedom.

The Oracle has to suffer the consequences of his vacillation. He was actually opting to already take profits. But he wasn't that aggressive as before. He may have some doubts about his market read. His market performance stands at 111.49 percent ROI. Where is not the rank indicator but could still be another one. His investment portfolio anyway this week dropped to 11.08 percentage points.

Trust Me come stands tall in first place at 120.77 percent ROI. Below is the table that shows how our players performed during the period covered.

Bottom line spin

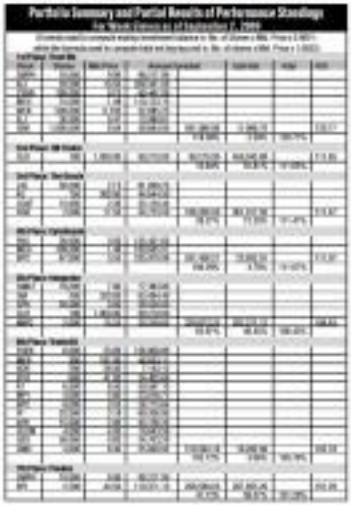
The market is technically driven but fundamentally sound, I believe. Under these circumstances, I would consider taking aggressive position on the buy side when value turnover start to build up after some consolidation at the 2,700 level or so of the PSEi. More pleasant surprises are still supposed to happen in the coming days.

Break

Laughter is said to be the best medicine. Here's one good joke from a good friend: "A lawyer challenged his math whiz law secretary for lady with the following question: 'Kapag binigyan ko ng P5 million ba 15 percent, ibig ang ibinigyan mo? Secretary: Sabot, sir; dami, ibo at dis pa, nanggigilis ka!" Lawyer: If I give P5.0 million ba 15 percent, how many will you receive? Secretary: Everything sir, my dear, my fun and more, I'll take them all away!).

You may reach the Market Rider at market.rider@inquirer.com.ph or directly at dennisonsr@yahoo.com.

Portfolio Summary and Partial Results of Performance Standings
Week 13 (Covered 8/31/09 to 9/4/09)



Corporate liquidation blues

IT'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE MERRill Lynch sold three financial institutions imploded and caused the still lingering global economic crunch.

Some financial analysts believe the worst is over for the United States and the other countries whose economies are tied to the American market.

The cynics, however, are not impressed by the so-called "green shoots" that indicate a revival of consumer confidence and investment optimism. They think the small leaves may just be the start of wild grass.

The exact number of local companies that closed shop as a result of the once-in-a-century economic meltdown is still anyone's guess. The evening class on this matter will be difficult to enlist.

Brokers unable to explicitly explain with their creditors, local businessmen who call it quits often do so with the least fanfare. They simply liquidate their stocks, pay off their employees and padlock their offices.

Those who treat the closure as a temporary setback from which they hope to recover in the future go through the motions of formal dissolution and cessation of business.

These businessmen know that disappearing from the scene without any bye or leave from their creditors or the regulatory authorities would have adverse effects on their ability to quickly reopen their business when economic conditions later improve.

Termination

The things that a dissolved corporation or whose certificate of registration has been revoked can do were the subject of query to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

A corporation sought guidance on certain activities it planned to undertake as it went through the process of terminating its corporate existence.

For starters, the SEC pointed out that a dissolved corporation ceases to exist, is without any corporate powers and has none of the attributes of a legal corporation.

But the corporation concerned has, under the law, the right to operate as such for three years from the time of its dissolution or loss of registration.

During that period, the corporation can prosecute and defend suits by or against it, settle and close its affairs, and dispose of or liquidate whatever assets it still has.

Since the law allowance given is for winding up purposes only, the corporation is prohibited from doing any act whose objective is to continue the business for which it was earlier organized.

CORPORATE B6

PRULINK — PRU LIFE U.K.

Investments of Pamilya Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week (Aug. 31, 2009)	Last Week (Aug. 24, 2009)
Bond Fund - Peso	1.7744	1.7633
Managed Fund - Peso	1.6715	1.6615
Growth Fund - Peso	1.6069	1.6003
Equity Fund - Peso	0.7356	0.7251
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.1881	1.1881
Secured Return Fund I	1.0000	1.0000
Secured Return Fund II	1.0000	1.0000
Stabilizing Fund - Peso	1.0013	1.0013
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.0139	1.0139

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telecare GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

NOTICE TO eTELECARE GLOBAL SOLUTIONS, INC. SHAREHOLDERS

On August 25, 2009, the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") approved the amendments to the Amended Articles of Incorporation of eTelecare Global Solutions, Inc. (the "Company") increasing the par value of the Company's shares of stock from ₱2.00 to ₱10.00 per share and correspondingly decreasing the number of shares comprising the Company's authorized capital stock from 65,000,000 to 100 shares and providing that the Company shall not issue fractional shares (the "Reverse Stock Split"). The Reverse Stock Split was effective from August 25, 2009 (the "Effective Date") upon the SEC's approval.

Pursuant to the Amended Articles of Incorporation of the Company, all fractional shares that resulted from the Reverse Stock Split were cancelled as of the Effective Date. Shareholders of record of the Company immediately prior to the Effective Date (or as of August 24, 2009) who would have been entitled to receive fractional shares as a consequence of the Reverse Stock Split ("Affected Shareholders") shall instead be paid the cash value of such fractional shares, to be determined by multiplying the total number of shares recorded in their respective names as of August 24, 2009 by US$9.00, without interest and less any applicable withholding tax. For more information or a refresher on the tax implication to persons receiving such payment, please refer to the section entitled "Tax Treatment of Cash Payment for Fractional Shares" of the Definitive Information Statement for the Special Stockholders' Meeting held on April 28, 2009.

The Company is sending letters to each Affected Shareholder to advise of the Reverse Stock Split and the requirements for the collection of the aforementioned payment. These letters are mailed to the Affected Shareholders at their respective addresses recorded with Professional Stock Transfer Service, Inc., the Company's stock transfer agent. Affected Shareholders that hold their shares through a stock broker or other custodian should contact such stock broker or custodian to obtain such payment.

The Company shall issue checks in the respective names of the Affected Shareholders which shall be available for pick-up by such Affected Shareholders and/or their duly authorized representatives during business hours on any business day after September 1, 2009. The Company reiterates that all Affected Shareholders are advised to consult their own tax advisers concerning the tax consequences of, and the tax reporting and payment obligations arising from, their receipt from the Company of cash payment in lieu of fractional shares.

For any inquiries on the foregoing, please call Atty. Michael N. Montero at (632) 918-5670.

eTelecare Global Solutions, Inc.
September 04, 2009

BUSINESS Friday

E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/business

Business Features Editor Margie Quiogue-Espino

Face to face with the magical and the macabre

Ad Congress holds key to sleight of hand

SCENES of the featured commercials

By Roger Pe
Contributor

THE DIRECTORS: (clockwise) Gienzo, Madeniza, Prejas and Bravante

IN THIS YEAR'S PHILIPPINE Ad Congress, delegates will come face to face with the magical and the macabre.

So what's magic got to do with today's weakening peso economy?

Last Aug. 8, Ad Congress organizers officially launched a series of TV commercials teasers to drum up excitement for the grand event.

Viewers are asked to interpret the commercials—what exactly happened.

"Ano ba magic nun? (How do you see it?)," is what is asked of viewers. It is also the theme of this year's Ad Congress.

Let there be magic

As in previous gatherings where ad agencies exert their best to woo the event's theme advertising campaign, this year's result was no less dramatic.

Advertising, media and marketing industry leaders went to the Ayala Museum to behold the luminous magical Hermando Dolor de Ayala, then president. Charmaine Cuallar, and the chair of this year's event Margot Torres.

What enthralling TV commercial directors—Haron Tesoro, Ami Bravante, Cesar Libertino and AJ Bersales—were tasked to do an Ad Congress first: to depict a mysterious event whose story comes to us only through the perspective of four different characters.

Then, the Trailer drew us to the Main Course. "The Magician," "The Stagehand," "The Assistant" and "The Bride."

Did the four directors deliver?

Reputations

It is meeting to say a new generation of Emmy TV ad-makers enhances the reputation in filmmaking.

The four commercials come across as mini movie trailers. They were reportedly edited, enhanced, beautifully painted, and appropriately scored with spine-tingling soundtrack.

Madeniza promises to be the future of Philippine TV commercials. If his commercial evokes, Dracula is a wonderful production. Prejas is, as always, reliable, and Bravante appears to be a rising star.

The unsung heroes of the four commercials, the cinematographers, should also be recognized—Rody Lacap, Lucky Lacuesta, Odie Tiro-ona and Dennis Montano.

Cliffhanger

All the directors used the same set, props and cast of talent. Each one tells the story in his own inimitable style.

All four commercials are striking in their favorite characters.

Which one do you like the most? Who created the most engaging storytelling style? If you were the director, how would you interpret the events?

The directors of the ads succeeded in evoking child-like wonder among their viewers, recalling the time when people used to believe in magic?

The commercials all end with a cliffhanger.

And for you to find out what really happened, you may have to be there at the 21st Philippine Advertising Congress, when it opens in Baguio City on Sept. 10.

GOINGS-ON

Wedding Expo goes 'green'

THINGS & ARTS & THE CITY, the country's premier organizer of the biggest and finest prenuptial wedding fairs, introduces its advocacy for a clean and green environment at the Wedding Expo Philippines' 10th edition at the PICC Forum, CCP Complex on Sept. 5-6.

"Go Green at 10," a Wedding Expo Philippines' pitch to conscientious soul mates-to-be.

Bad Lycee Living Highway, a project centered in the greening and restoration of the North Lucena Expressway area amidst Flames & Bliss squeals, participates in this year's expo to promote tree saplings and seedlings as gifts for the wedding sponsors, entourage and guests.

For further details, call (632) 8716561-4000555.

Talk on meat, fish processing set

THE 2009 BESTTREASURE SEEDS and Development Program enthusiast a one-day seminar on meat and fish processing on Sept. 13. Sunday at the College of Social Work and Community Development at Baguio University, Governor Pack Road, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Participants will learn how to make recipes, including longganisa, Chinese sausage, embutido, chicken nuggets and chicken and pork tocino, among others.

Lunch and snacks and the canned and jarred tasting materials as well as handouts will be provided.

For questions, call 4261504, 4211573, 9186551 and 4207001 or check www.besttreasureseeds.com.

Cebu franchise expo on

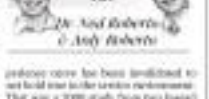
ENTREPRENEURS LOOKING FOR A franchise to invest in can take part in the 10th Cebu Franchise Expo to find their potential business. Over 70 booths showcase more than 200 franchise and business opportunities. The set to be held at the SM City Cebu Trade Hall from Sept. 11 to 13.

A franchise seminar will be conducted by Sentro Franchise Consultant Rudolf Kühn at SM City Cebu Conference Hall D on Saturday, Sept. 12 at 1:30 p.m. For more or seminar details, please call (02) 9900734 to (02) 7260502 or (02)8556112; e-mail 4dbm@sentrofranchise.com or log on to www.cebufranchiseexpo.com.

Are loyal customers really profitable?

(Second of two parts)

By Andy Roberts



LAST WEEK, WE ADDRESSED THE first piece of our reader's question on customer loyalty and profitability. We were surprised that we would even "insinuate" that customer loyalty programs were not profitable. We asked him to open his mind to change and question long time-sacred marketing "mantra" like having customer loyalty programs.

How can we our reader's second issue or question, aren't loyal customers the most profitable?

You're right in saying that this is the most significant question. "Is our recent column insinuating that loyal customers are not profitable?" As you were thinking about your opinion, we went to the just to touch with ours. We don't mean to insinuate anything. We want to say in the most explicit terms that "Yes, loyal customers are not you most profitable customers!"

Marketing science

It was the 1990 Reichheld-Sasser study that said they were. Specifically their study calculated that "a 5 percent improvement in retention will lead to a profit increase of 35 percent to 95 percent." With that kind of return, who would want to be left behind by the customer sensitivity loyalty band wagon?

However, after the 1996 Reichheld-Sasser study we chat is not her column, a much more customer profitability study published in 2003 by Owen Reichheld by Reinartz, professors, Frank Gupta and Donald Lehmann, made its own calculations and found that "A 1 percent improvement in retention can lead to a profit increase of only 2.8 percent to 5.2 percent."

Naturally, the marketing science community asked: "Which study is more correct, and are more credible and trustworthy the better guide to customer retention and loyalty policy decisions?" Those interested in getting to answer weighed the evidence as well as looked into the assumptions of the two studies.

We summarize the findings of this evaluation.

The Reichheld-Sasser study predicted that, "The operating costs to serve loyal customers will decline over time." This will be so because as the company gains experience with its customers, it can serve them more efficiently. Was this borne this "done" of the study? No, it was not.

Experience curve

Reichheld and Sasser drew this from the concept of the "experience curve" (or "learning curve") that was first popularized in 1982 by Bruce Henderson of the Boston Consulting Group.

According to Henderson, the experience curve makes it possible for "the costs of production [to] decline about 20 percent to 30 percent with each doubling of accumulated experience." However, this generalization came from Henderson's work in the manufacturing arena.

What Reichheld and Sasser did was essentially to assume that the "experience curve" will also hold true in the service setting. Unfortunately, the never had any empirical validation. In fact, the research that we have been involved to set hold true in the service environment. That was a 2000 study from two Israeli professors, Werner Reinartz and V. Kumar.

In a ranking study of customers of more than a hundred companies, the Reinartz and Kumar study found that "loyal customers are all more expensive to manage than ordinary customers." In the high-tech service sector, loyal customers are even much more expensive to serve.

The 2003 Gupta-Lehmann study reinforced this conclusion and explained how there is much lower profitability from any continuing retention improvement.

According to the Gupta-Lehmann data, "Increasing costs accompanied increasing retention. And the cost of retention increases dramatically as a company reaches high retention levels."

For example, it is more expensive to raise retention rates from 90 percent to 95 percent than to improve those rates from 50 percent to 75 percent. This led Gupta and Lehmann to conclude that "It is not optimal for a company to have 100 percent retention."

Segment those select

Another well designed and rigorously conducted study established The Schwartz-Raven and the Gupta-Lehmann study. The was the 2000 Timothy Keiningham et. al. study in Europe. What is innovative in this particular study is its practical perspective about what to do with customer retention and loyalty. "Select, link up for customer retention factors customer retention. It's only after you've segmented your customers correctly and implement steps to you that you should target for loyalty."

In those you are. The choice before you is which to follow: what practice is possible to the airline and banking industries? Or should do things according to the strategy supported by an old theory versus changing to new ways backed up by a new theory.

In making the choice, a refining consideration comes down practicing whether Ram Lemon who said: "Nothing is more practical than a good theory. There's no such thing as good in theory but not in practice. A bad practice comes from a bad theory."

Perhaps you, our readers, can e-mail to or your own experiences with the customer loyalty game. What do your methods disclose?

(Drop your questions, comments, feedback to us at Marketingrx@pldtdsl.net or Marketingrx@gmail.com or text to 0918-5350612.)

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International Business & Brand Strategist, Author of Juice Brand Strategy

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9:00AM - 4:45PM
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Economy seen to grow at a faster clip in Q4

Paper cites gains in exports, growth in remittances

By Michelle V Rosario

THE ECONOMY IS EXPECTED to grow at an even faster clip in the third and fourth quarters of the year.

According to the Market Call, a monthly paper published by First Metro Investment Corp. and University of the Philippines and the Pacific, the Philippines will likely grow by 2.5 percent in the third quarter and by 4.5 percent in the fourth quarter.

"More recent economic indicators ... are giving an impression that the 'green shoots' reported earlier are beginning to sprout," said the Market Call.

The paper cited the continuing growth of remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the month-on-month increase in exports.

Remittances in the first half of the year reached $8.3 billion, up 2.8 percent from that in the same period last year. This prompted the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to declare that the last growth in remittances is earlier projected for 2009 could already be deemed conservative.

Last year, remittances reached $18.4 billion.

Remittances help fuel domestic consumption, which is a key growth driver of the economy. The Philippines is the fourth biggest recipient of remittances. The three biggest are China, India and Mexico.

"In the coming months, we are optimistic that OFW remittances will hold up as several hiring agreements are still to take effect. Moreover, this may further decelerate as signs of stabilization or recovery in our major OFW markets have been encouraging," Market Call said.

Market Call also said demand from the United States and other export markets were gradually recovering as the global economic crisis eases.

"Exports are also likely to post positive growth in Q4 (fourth quarter), due to base effects and consistently rising monthly exports as East Asia (especially China) and US economies gain traction," it added.

Since last last year, reports have been registering year-on-year declines. In the first half of this year, exports plummeted 32.8 percent to $17 billion.

Market Call said the economy would further grow in the next two quarters, as export earnings pick up and as remittances grow to boost overall income of the economy.

$6-B BPO sector builds on early gains

By Dante L. Lavan

2nd of two parts

FOR AN INDUSTRY THAT prides itself in following precedents and individually the success of business process outsourcing (BPO) seems to have hinged on seemingly small instances that later seemed set to be "game changers."

One such policy shift that would later cause to have massive positive implications on the industry was the government's decision to allow (individual buildings to be accredited) by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

According to Lloyd T. Ong Hoad Ayala, the government's timely action was a most providential, by coincidence since about three (or two) years was the exact time [when] the BPO industry [boom].

Policy shift

"Before it [government] is removed, export processing zone rules provided incentives to investors only if they located in a specific industrial reclusquark," he said.

"One of the key insights pushed by [the Department of Trade and Industry and the Board of Investment] was to suggest and push for changing those rules, so that the Peza framework could now allow building owners to designate and apply their buildings for Peza accreditation," Ayala added.

The Peza accreditation result was the accreditation of the BGBC Plaza in Makati City as the first Peza-certified building—a site that becomes a magnet for BPO firms de-gain the fledgling offices back. One of the 2007 East Asian Financial crisis.

"If that had not taken place, a BPO coming here might have been told by the government, 'you must locate in Mactan, Inc.,'" the Ayala executive said. "In such a situation, there is no doubt that the take off would have been much slower."

"It's like drilling for oil," he said, crediting the BPO sector's bankers at the trade department for pointing for the sale change. "You have to go where the people are. Paper processing zones are quite far from urban locations. In this change allowed BPOs to drill for oil by looking for the best people where they were."

After that, selling the Philippines to foreign firms as an outsourcing destination became a lot easier.

Another BPO industry pioneer, ICT Group president Karen Buenaventural recalled how critical it was for a concerted effort between the public and private sectors to promote the country as a product of potential investors.

"Back in 2000, I approached ITE to talk to [then] Secretary [Mar] Roxas and he quickly came on the bandwagon," the said. "He immediately promised that it since 'country will."

Selling PP

But although Ong said that is the BPO industry, foreign business and their clients first had to be convinced about the viability of a particular company ... its political, social and economic potentials ... before even taking a look at individual firms offering their services to them.

This is where companies like Ganesa—with its broad influence in the information technology industry—were critical to the country's success.

"It was very important because companies would refer to consultancy firms or research firms if they wanted to locate offshore," she said. "We needed to sell the country first."

Whatever it approach: a premium client, the first host or two would be about the country" the ICT Group chief said. "Only after they are convinced about the country's feasibility would I be able to talk about my company."

With the profits and private sectors focused on this goal, the BPO sector grew into a $6.1-billion-yearly industry with close to 600,000 employees today ... and aiming for one million in just a few years.

"We are not resting on our laurels," Buenaventural said. "We are now focused on making sure that the industry is sustainable over the long run."

Indeed the BPO sector is now widely credited as one of the industries that helped the country weather the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression.

In the end, the sector's success is all about having foresight, the cooperation of government agencies and the private sector, dogged determination and—according to former Board of Investments managing director Gregory Ilustre, go—that crucial dinner between top officials of ITE and Ilustre in 2001.

"That opened the doors of the world for us," he said. "It changed everything."

SPECIAL REPORT

Filinvest earmarks ₱3B to build upscale high-rise in Global City

By Doris C. Dantao

TYCOON ANDREW GOTIANUN JR.-HEADED Bria Filinvest Development Corp. will invest about P3 billion to build an upscale residential condominium, the Brandon, at the Bonifacio Global City and says it aims to launch by 2012.

The Brandon, a two-tower residential high-rise, sits on a 3,000-square meter prime residential property in Global City.

FDC is now selling 145 units at the west tower of the Brandon. The 30-storey east tower units will be built for the second tower. Both towers are expected to be completed by 2012.

The Brandon offers only four units per floor to ensure maximum privacy for residents. Prices range from P8.3 million to P38 million. The smallest units (two-bedroom junior suite) have a floor area of 70 square meters, while the biggest (three-bedroom suite) have a floor area of 140 square meters.

"It is one of the last remaining properties that has the view of the Manila Golf Club," Filinvest Land Inc. president Joseph Yap told reporters yesterday.

In the meantime, FDC's residential property arm Filinvest Land Inc. has assigned First Metro Investment Corp., BPI Capital and BDO Capital to underwrite its maiden retail bond offering worth as much as P3 billion, Yap said.

He said the debut offering would likely take place next month.

For this year, FLI expects to post about 10- to 15-percent growth in residential property sales, Yap said.

Gov't eyes gradual settlement of its debt to BSP

THE GOVERNMENT WILL SET aside P4 billion from the proposed 2010 national budget to partly settle its obligations to the central bank.

The law creating the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) in 1993 to replace the old Central Bank of the Philippines required the government to infuse P83 billion in capital to the new monetary authority.

But the government has so far given only P28 billion to the BSP. Monetary officials' request for the finance and budget departments to settle the balance of P48 billion have since fallen on deaf ears.

The delay in the release of the additional capital has upset monetary officials. They said the funds could be used to support local banks' lending to businesses and individuals ... an activity that could help spur growth amid a global turmoil.

But starting next year, the government plans to settle its obligations to the BSP by allotting P4 billion every year for the next 12 years, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said.

"The initial payment of P4 billion is already part of next year's budget," Andaya said reporters Wednesday night at the sidelines of the hearing on the proposed P1.54-trillion national budget for 2010 in the House of Representatives.

This mode of payment adopted by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) means that it had effectively rejected an earlier BSP proposal for a partial settlement of up to P35 billion before the end of the year.

BSP and finance officials earlier asked the government to issue bonds worth up to P25 billion before the end of 2009—the proceeds of which would go to the central bank.

But the DBM and the Department of Finance have decided not to push through with the proposal, mindful of the growing budget deficit of the government. *Michelle V. Rosario*

Metrobank @ 47: REDEFINING LEADERSHIP

In the increasingly competitive landscape of the Philippine banking industry, the Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company (Metrobank) remains one of the foremost financial institutions in the country. Since its establishment in 1962, it has displayed a remarkable ability to adapt to changing times and emerge stronger, more resilient, and stronger. Now on its 47th year, Metrobank continues to exhibit robust growth anchored on a solid foundation, cultivating its position of leadership.

Leadership exemplified

Metrobank president Arthur Ty attributes its leadership to its firm dedication to fulfilling its vision. "We continuously strive to be the best bank for our stakeholders," he said. "We are focused not only on financial performance, but also on quality of the performance."

Guided by its vision and driven by its commitment, Metrobank has been able to weather the difficulties that marked the business sector in the past years. "Through every trial, we have always emerged stronger and wiser," said Ty. "Each commitment has molded the Bank to become even more equipped to face new challenges ahead."

Amidst trying times, Metrobank continues to be accorded numerous awards and citations from government and financial institutions as well as global publications for its exemplary performance and high level of customer satisfaction.

This year alone, Metrobank was awarded the Gold Trusted Brand award from Reader's Digest for the sixth consecutive time. It was also cited in the 2009 Corporate Governance Asia Annual Recognition Awards for the fifth consecutive year. Metrobank was also ranked first in financial statements by the Wall Street Journal Asia.

But real adding shine to the Metrobank name, the awards serve as stellar proof of the Bank's commitment to be the trusted banking partner of its stakeholders.

Ahead of the curve

In confirmation of this commitment, Metrobank set many firsts in the industry with the customer's needs in mind. It opened the doors to branch banking which brought financial services closer to the people. It was also the first bank to introduce ATMs, the first to bring a Filipino bank overseas when it established its first international branch in Tokyo in 1970. It also launched the first talking automated teller machine (ATM) in the country.

Metrobank continues its pioneering endeavors for the benefit of clients. Recognizing the indispensable role technology plays today, Metrobank has made significant investments in technology and operations enhancements to better support its products and improve service delivery.

Enhancements made on Metrobank.com's collection and payment modules, added security protection for internet banking clients, and service elements with management reporting tools are among the bank's technological efforts and upgrades to operational efficiency. The Bank's e-banking portals – Metrophone Banking, Metrobank Mobile Banking, and Metrobank.com Internet banking facility – provide Metrobank clients access to their accounts practically anywhere in the globe.

Expansive Network

From its office in Binondo and a single branch in 1962, Metrobank now spans a consolidated branch network of over 750 branches, 1,800 ATMs worldwide and 15 foreign branches, subsidiaries, and representative offices.

Metrobank also has a consolidated ATM network of over 1,130 while members may more than the 6,000 ATMs the Bank has access to through the Expressnet, Megalink, or Metrobank E-Y, service in 1986. The Bank's affiliation with Citibank Maestro international allows its ATM cardholders to access their accounts through over 2 million Cirrus Maestro ATMs and POS terminals in 210 countries.

Social Responsibility

Metrobank sees that in being the trusted banking partner, articulated by its promise of "You're in Good Hands." This promise extends not only to customers but to employees, partners and beneficiaries of its corporate citizenship.

Guided by the words of its founder and group chairman, Dr. George S. K. Ty, that "leadership is because leaders leadership is community service," Metrobank is fully committed to carry out its responsibility to the community and dedicated to contributing to nation building.

Through its corporate social responsibility arm, Metrobank Foundation, Inc., Metrobank advocates the kind of leadership that puts emphasis on both business success and community contribution.

The Foundation has been dedicated to catering to the needs of its target constituents for 30 years now, improving social conditions and empowering communities involving education, health care, arts and culture, financial assistance, and recognition of public service excellence.

"The Foundation has been and will remain at the forefront of the Bank's priorities," said Ty.

With its sights set on the vision, Metrobank continues to lead the way towards building a quality bank and being the trusted partner of clients, employees, and the entire nation.

47 years Metrobank

Corporate Securities Info

From page B1

The task of bringing the corporation's affairs to an orderly close is given to its board of directors. To accomplish this objective, the directors may be given the discretionary authority to become "trustees" of the corporation's assets for the benefit of the creditors and stockholders.

Authorized acts

The SEC went through the list of the corporation's planned activities during the liquidation period and gave its comments on them.

Can the corporation issue shares of stocks?

No, it cannot because such issuance "which necessarily implies the infusion of further investment or new capital into the corporation, is obviously inconsistent with the winding-up of corporate affairs."

May it sell its assets or purchase properties?

Selling its assets for liquidation purposes is okay. Purchasing properties is allowed if that will be consistent with liquidation. But, the SEC observed, "it is rare for a liquidating entity to further acquire more non-liquid assets."

May the corporation sue another person or entity in connection with properties?

Again, the liquidation period is not a bar to the enforcement of its rights as a corporation. According to a Supreme Court decision, the SEC said "the matter may commence is not what is to proceed to final judgment even beyond the three-year period."

Court filings

A creditor may not consult with regard to filing a case in court on behalf of the corporation while it is going through the liquidation process.

By way of background, when a corporation goes under its assets, it is conceptual in nature and not that artificial by way of a resolution, otherwise the asset will have no the case.

On this point, the SEC explained that this liquidation process was not a hindrance to the initiation of that resolution because "the board of directors, acting as trustees of the corporation, may authorize an officer to sue or initiate a complaint in Philippine courts."

The solicitors, however, on how the corporation shall describe itself in making the court filings.

The Rules of Court provide that where a suit is initiated in court by a corporation, it should state that it is duly organized and established under our laws. This requirement rests on the principle that only natural or juridical persons (creations of the requisite corporations origin) may file actions in courts.

The SEC said that description cannot be used by a corporation whose existence has already been terminated.

Although left unsaid in its opinion, that prohibition, however, does not bar the board of directors, acting as trustees, from filing an action in court on behalf of the corporation.

When the three-year period ends, or later if certain events require its extension, and the corporation's assets have been properly disposed of, the corporation becomes history.

No further action has to be taken by the corporation, nor is the SEC obliged to issue a certificate for that purpose.

(For feedback, please write to: cpublic@inquirer.com.ph)

Shares ...

From page B1

4,500 price to 1,881.31 while the all-shares index fell 0.20 percent to 1,790.82. Turnover was moderate with 3.341 billion shares worth P2.722 billion (US$ 54 million).

There were 58 gainers against 51 losers, while 68 remained unchanged.

Philippine Long Distance Company fell 1.42 percent to P2,403, while Bank of the Philippine Islands fell 1.12 percent to P44. Top-traded Megaworld Corp. remained unchanged at P1.40, while Energy Development Corp. gained 2.37 percent to P4.60. AFP

Gov't sets sale ...

From page B1

Three state lenders — Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines will also be co-arrangers.

Revenues of the government's top two collection agencies—the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs—fell 0.4 percent and 9.2 percent, respectively, in the first seven months of the year from a year ago due to lower tax rates and a decline in trade as the global recession weighed on the local economy.

With just five more months of collections left, the two agencies must double if they can hit their full-year targets. *With a report from Reuters*

BUSINESS

Chickening out on chicken

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

IF WE CHICKEN OUT ON THE chicken debate now, the stakeholders in our P150 billion poultry industry may soon see the sector's demise.

Chickening out is defined as "showing a lack of courage," "too scared to do a particular thing," or "excessively timid." Three terms must avoid this weakness. The government's economic branch, the legislature and the farmers themselves.

Background

On Jan. 1, 2010, the tariffs on all industrial and agricultural products will drop to 0-5 percent because of the Asean Common Effect Preferential Tariff (CEPT) agreement, except for five sub-lines.

The Alyansa Agribusiness, together with the Federation of Philippine Industries (FPI) and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), asked for a deferral of this move.

This is because the Philippines has some agricultural and industrial sectors that are not ready to survive the onslaught of cheap Asean imports with very low or no tariffs.

On Aug. 10, the Alyansa Agribusiness wrote the President, stating their support for the original Department of Agriculture (DA) position taken last April 17. "The Agriculture Department wants the government to seek a five-year suspension of full implementation of tariff rate set next year under the Asean CEPT scheme."

However, on Aug. 27, the DA reported the dismal results of the Asean CEPT Ministerial meeting held the previous week. Only rice and sugar would be exempted from the new tariff regime.

AGRIWATCH

In a meeting of the Alyansa Board of Directors, which represents all agricultural sectors, it was recommended that the five-year suspension of tariff reductions for selected sectors such as poultry, swine and corn, should still be pushed.

But if we are allowed only one more sector in the exempted, poultry should be given top priority.

Three sectors

We do not have much time to save the poultry sector. The only event that can change the 0-to-5 percent tariff on poultry is the meeting of the Asean heads of state on Oct. 25.

The executive branch should not be content with the status quo of exempting only rice and sugar from the 0- to 5-percent tariff.

The DA should immediately provide the President with the proper information so that she can credibly argue the need to exempt the poultry sector as well.

Our legislators should also move quickly.

FPI's International Trade Policy Committee Chair Jong Serrano states that in the 13th Alfa Council meeting of Sept. 28, 1999, the Philippines mandated that the elimination of tariff "will require the approval of the legislature." Our legislature never gave this approval. Further, our Congress has never acted on tariffs, though it has every right to do so.

Instead, it is our Executive branch that has been determining our tariffs.

If it is shown that our poultry sector will be severely harmed by the 0- to 5-percent tariff, Congress must not chicken out and do nothing. Instead, it should pass a resolution to state its position that the poultry sector should be exempted.

Finally, the farmers themselves should not chicken out, because their very livelihood depends on this. They should not "lack courage," "be too scared" or "excessively timid." They should fight for their rights and achieve the objectives. "Send sovereignty paradigm" described in Walden Bello's book "The Food Wars," which is being launched today. "It is about making participation in the international economy one that builds local economic capacity rather than decamping it, as neoliberal trade policies do."

The author is chair of Alyansa Agribusiness, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects and former undersecretary for agriculture and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agriwatch@yahoo.com or oldjoe (02) 8522122.)

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The look

ACTRESS JUDY ANN SANTOS, ex-banker Felicia Antonio, power-lifting champion and fashion retailer Bebe Gao, model Isabelle Daza, artist Michelline Syjuco and jewelry designer Joanna Undiluri are among the 25 women and men whose style images will be on

THE LOOK C2

Judy Ann Santos

Actress; wife to TV host and actor Ryan Agoncillo; mother to Juliana, 4

Very casual ako...jeans, shirt, and flats. I always wear my wedding ring, along with my engagement ring and my watch. And I always bring a big bag because I want to bring everything all the time. I used to love drinking diet soda. Ngayon sinusugal ko na sa tubig ko. I took out beef and pork from my meals, so chicken, fish, and veggies na lang. I admire a woman's 'pag nakakaya ang sense of humor. Kapag nasubsob ang araw mo sa buhay - 'Yung kaya niyang dalhin yung buhay. When a person is smart enough to face life and its everyday challenges, I think she's very, very beautiful.

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The look

From page C1

veiled in "The Look of Style" Sept. 7, 6 p.m., at Ayala Museum.

This event mounted by Inquirer Lifestyle, Nokia, as part of the Lifestyle series, with Cosmo home magazine, projects the zeitgeist of the era—the seamless and impressive blend of style and substance in many of today's men and women.

The images are the result of creative collaboration by fashion photographers Jun de Leon, Mark Nicdao, Jana Blank, Jo-ann Bingwa, Paolo Pineda and Jom Cebu, Don Douglas Ong and Mike Jo, hairstyle by Edwal Professional and make-up by Maybelline, styled by Look magazine fashion editor Kat Cruz.

The other men and women are Wyn Wyn Ong, Mindy Wicker-Tiamzon, Amina Amman-Monon, Tweetie de Leon Gonzalez, Esther Ocampo, Audrey Tan-Zialcita, Kristine Lobregat, Ria Fernando, Lolca Cuipo, Rose Prieto-Valdes, Rosanna Ocampo, Dina Bonoyo-Tanseco, Richie Daigo-Torres, Angel Aquino, Arnel Ceniza, Mat Bautizon, Jilian Ann Ibañez-Embodiba, and Pelo Pascual.

The marriage of style and substance is evocative with Nokia's 6700 Classic and its Ovi.com services—stylish in technology that dovetails comfortably from their reference to today's lifestyle elements.

Felicia Hung-Atienza, 40
President and founding member of Chinese International School Manila; wife to TV host Kix Atienza; and mother to Ane, Elena and Bienvenido

I go for very crisp, clean-cut lines and opt for conservative dressing for evening events. I choose dresses and styles that flatter my silhouette and celebrate womanhood. I'm very strict when it comes to my diet, but only during weekdays. I try to eat healthy. My definition of a beautiful woman is someone with a lot of confidence...cause if an inner trait clone an outer appearance.

Ruby Gan, 48
President/COO, Shopbetula, Inc., power dyke/mother of college students Alberto, 20, and Raphael, 18

I believe in having the right pair of shoes—it can make or break any outfit. Having the perfect earrings is also very essential to me. My secret beauty routine would be cleansing and moisturizing. There are no shortcuts to a good and healthy body. I do strength training three times a week and run four times a week. Happiness is being able to do everything that I want, for myself and my children. I am more at peace just being with my loved ones.

Isabelle Daza, 21
Part time president/socialite, student and model

I always like a nite out because I feel it flatters me most. For a casual lunch, it would be a dressy top balanced with denim, and some dogs and bangles to accessorize. I swim, ever go to sleep with my makeup on. The gym's not that exciting after a while, so I do other sports—basketball each day/tennis lessons with my mom or go horseback riding. I mean I love Oprah. It sounds so cliché, but she really inspires and helps people. The last book I read was "The Wisest Hands Alone" by Becky Cord. he—about how people are clouded by money, power and fame, and about...they're like solutions to every thing. It kind of gives you a sense of reality.

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ASCOTT CARNAVAL

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF LUXURY LIVING

Manila Philippines Gilbey mania, add colorful dress delectable culinary delights and lastly an exhilarating ride on the stage by Ascott Makati's celebration of the Ascott Group's 25th anniversary Carnaval, a blast-be-inspired event honors the top 10 supporters of Ascott Makati and loyal residents that have come to truly know the serviced residence as their home in the Philippines.

While Ascott Makati is officially two years old since its rebranding in 2007, it has transformed its serviced residences to boast yet warm living spaces. The property enjoys lush surroundings, inviting warm and stylish interiors plus modern home comforts. And to help our guests feel right at home, Ascott Makati introduced the Ascott Host program – its own version of the long-standing concierge. These are the friendly receivers and distributors that have enabled Ascott Makati to evolve from a centrally-located property to a five-star luxury.

With the challenging economic conditions, Ascott Makati's inspiring tasks and consistent delivery of international service quality merits not only the continuous patronage of its discerning guests but also its partnership with Global Business Travel Association's (formerly known as Institute of Corporate Travel Executives) corporate and residents for their staunch support. Led by country general manager, Arthur Ceniza and property general manager, Lee Yan Ping, the Ascott team remains resilient and positive ahead.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS WITH ANNIVERSARY RATES AND SPECIALS

Ascott International pioneered the serviced residence concept with its first international property. The Ascott Singapore on Scotts Road in Singapore in 1984. Over 20 years, Ascott has, through its three brands Ascott, Somerset and Citadines, grown to be the world's largest owner-operator in the business, with 20,000 units in 66 cities over 20 countries. Ascott has 160 properties in Asia Pacific, Europe and the Gulf Region.

To commemorate its 25th year celebration, Ascott International has designed anniversary rates and specials to celebrate with its customers. It offers 25% off your Ascott stay with rates starting at Php5,775++. Anniversary rates are applicable for daily stays of up to seven nights for room varieties made up at below in Singapore Dollars and are valid for bookings until 31 December 2009.

For existing long-staying guests who make succeeding reservations for one month or more, you will receive a complimentary eighth each month's stay – up to seven free nights. Guests may redeem their free nights at any Ascott international property worldwide. So BOOK NOW and enjoy these anniversary specials only at Ascott Makati!

Rates are subject to service charge and applicable government taxes. For more information on our anniversary specials, please call our Central Reservations Office at (65) 6739 0000 or email enquiry@ascottcentral.com.

About The Ascott Group Limited

Ascott is the world's largest international serviced residence owner-operator with over 19,000 operating serviced residence units in key cities of Asia Pacific, Europe and the Gulf region, as well as more than 6,000 units which are under development, making a total of 25,000.

The company operates three brands – Ascott, Somerset and Citadines, its portfolio spans 66 cities in 20 countries, 14 of which are new cities in Ascott's portfolio where its serviced residences are being developed.

Ascott is headquartered in Singapore. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of CapitaLand Limited, a Singapore Asia Pacific-based international real estate investment group. Ascott International pioneered the serviced residence concept with its first international property, The Ascott Singapore on Scotts Road in Singapore in 1984. Over 20 years, Ascott has, through its three brands Ascott, Somerset and Citadines, grown to be the world's largest owner-operator in the business, with 20,000 units in 66 cities over 20 countries. Ascott has 160 properties in Asia Pacific, Europe and the Gulf Region.

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Michelline Syjuco

Sculptor, jewelry artist

My style is sophisticated chic with an avant-garde twist. The most indispensable item in my wardrobe would be my Amanda ruff in bronze and gold, which I made myself. National Artist Napoleon Abueva encouraged me to pursue jewelry design and come out with an entire line. I love shoes! I have a big collection, 200-300 of all kinds. I think when you are happy, balanced in your mind, body, and soul, you really project a positive image that attracts other people.

Joanna Lhuillier

Jewelry designer

I would describe my style as casual chic, with a twist of sophistication. I love to accessorize my outfits with unique belts, shoes, jewelry, and of course, bags. A fabulous white shirt and designer jeans would be indispensable to me. I do not spend a lot of time at the salon. I would rather be creating a new design or hanging out with my boys. I also try and swim for an hour every afternoon. This is an essential part of my day, as it gives me the energy and tranquility that I need. A truly beautiful woman exudes inner beauty. And I believe confidence is the greatest gift a woman can have!

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AUG. 3, 2009 GRAND DRAW ISUZU D-Max winner Clara Elizabeth Granada

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SCHOOL of Fashion and the Arts faculty member conducting a free fashion workshop at Shang's Grand Atrium

AMINA Arnaiz-Alonso, one of SoFA's founders, shares tips during the seminars

STUDENTS' work is on exhibit at Shang's Grand Atrium

AFFORDABLE and stylish High Sierra backpacks for the athletic ones

Phil Youngbusband loves his backpack

FOOTBALL PLAYER Phil Youngbusband is the image model of High Sierra, a brand of casual campus bags.

"It is the smart choice because each bag has many features that would satisfy the needs of each user, and yet it is very affordable compared to all other authentic UK brands," Jimmy Wai, president and CEO of Primer Group, the exclusive distributor of the brand in the Philippines, said.

"Phil personifies the brand positioning of High Sierra as the smart choice," Wai said. "He excels in everything he does.... he earned a college degree, played with the Kaohsiung Fubon Lions of the Chinese Professional Baseball League

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Barbra, Cher—why they're beauty icons

Real beauty is effortless and should look effortless. If you carry yourself well and exude confidence, heads will turn and you will leave lasting impressions

Maricel Chua
Beauty on the Big Apple

I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED why gay men—from the elegantly subdued to the regally flamboyant—seem to gravitate toward Barbra Streisand. It's as if this esteemed diva could do no wrong, and members of the "pride" simply want to capture her charismatic personality

BARBRA B1

The Place To PLAY Has Opened. The Time To Play Is Now!

We all have our fantasies. Some wish to play the gourmet, others dream of playing the shopaholic, while some yearn to play world traveler, or thrill-seeker, or art lover. Now, there's a place where we can experience excitement and entertainment that never end – a place where we can play all day, everyday.

Resorts World at Manila, Asia's newest playground, opened its doors to the public for its soft launch last Friday, August 28. Thousands of guests aged 21 years old and above—from VIPs to businessmen, celebrities, and puppies—attended the event.

The ribbon cutting ceremony was graced by VIPs such as Mr. Tan Sri Lim Kok Thay, Chairman and Group Executive of Genting Group; Mr. Andrew Tan, Chairman of World Global Group, Inc.; Mr. Efraim C. Genuino, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR); Mr. Rafael S. Francisco, President and Chief Operating Officer of PAGCOR; Mr. David Chua, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Travellers International Hotel Group, Inc. (Travellers); Mr. Rogen Ilan, President of Travellers Commissioner Maruichiro C. Librando, Bureau of Immigration; Mr. Thuy Trinh, CEO of Resorts World at Manila; and Mr. Peter Forder, EVP of Resorts World at Manila. Celebrities and distinguished guests were also spotted all around the venue excitedly trying out the various gaming activities.

Guests wait for their sumptuous dishes at the buffet.

Some of the guests got to play the thrill-seeker at the ground floor of the casino. Guests were able to play the slot machines, electronic baccarat, electronic roulette, and simulated horse racing. There were also baccarat, craps, blackjack, and roulette tables. The first 3,000 guests were given Php500 worth of slot machine credits to feed the first craze on the exciting new machines.

Guests play their luck at the slot machines.

While others played games, some of the guests opted to play the gourmet. Hundreds of sequence dinners basked their palates to a sumptuous buffet of Asian cuisine from the newly opened Noodle Works restaurant, or to the delicious servings of Filipino food at Mercado. Other guests enjoyed the delectable dishes and cocktails at the innovative Bar 360.

There were also guests who played the role of the art lover as they watched the breathtaking performances of world-renowned acts such as Power Duo, Eurasia, and St. Petersburg Dancers at the Bar 360.

The event also featured games and raffles, and over P1M in cash prizes were given away during the opening weekend alone! Exciting prizes are still given away on a regular basis.

Resorts World at Manila promises its guests that there will be new shows to come – more facilities to enjoy, more rides to play. In the near future, guests will be able to play the shopaholic in their shopping corridor that houses upscale boutiques and high-end shops. They will also be able to play the world traveler in Maxims Hotel, the country's first 5-star hotel, and the world-famous Marriott Hotel.

Plus, Resorts World at Manila gave its guests a taste of the kind of entertainment it will offer. And since there's more to come, we can be sure that we can indulge in a full course of excitement soon! Be among the first to experience the thrills at the place to play. Visit Resorts World at Manila today!

Resorts World at Manila is a joint venture by some of the biggest companies in the region: Alliance Global Group, Inc., one of the country's largest conglomerates; Star Cruises Ltd., the leading cruise line in Asia-Pacific; and Genting Group, Malaysia's leading multinational corporation.

Resorts World at Manila is conveniently located across Gate 1, and is easily accessible by taking the Villamor Airbase Road through Gate 3 road or via Andrews Avenue at Pasay City. It is now open 24 hours a day, and 7 days a week. It currently has restaurants, a bar, and a vast gaming complex. Its shopping center, premium cinemas, theater and world-class hotels will open soon.

Sign up for the Resorts World at Manila PLAY Card now and enjoy exclusive perks and privileges at Resorts World at Manila. Thousands have already signed up. So sign up today so you can start to play!

For more information, call 839-0333 or visit www.rwmanila.com.

Resorts World at Manila | Newport City

MIGAL Entertainment's masterwork, Lily Monteverde, and ABS-CBN boardmember Frondie Garcia.

ABS-CBN's brilliant president and COO, stylish woman of substance and stature Charo Santos-Concio in Mikel Eljaik for Lauretta.

ABS-CBN head of corporate communications Bong Osorio with assistant head Cory Vidanes and ABS-CBN head of sales Angel Jimenez

MIGAL Pastor in Balenciaga with Ben Chan in Connor des Garcons; Bea Chanco in Randy Weber Tattoos and Bimbon Oca-ampo in Francis Libiran

SUPER silver gals. Bambi Montecastro-Ilio with Lizz Sabangan-Chong of Summit Publications and Rebina Sabangan-Ryal Robinson's Malls

Magical night of stars

MOVE Rosette Santos in John Herrera and Dr Aimee Aguilar-Tiu in Emilio Pucci

HOT WITH Nikki Gil, Billy Crawford in Paul Cabral, John Prats in Klyven, Sandra Taal-Vera (seated) Bambi Montecastro-Ilio, Arnold Vegafria, Aimee San Diego and Dr Z Tan

JEWELRY Rosalind in Paul Smith's

ANGELICA Pangandaman in Eric de los Santos and Derek Ramsay in Francis Libiran

GERALD Anderson in Inno Sorro

LUIS Manzano in Hugo Boss

SMASH Hero John Lloyd Cruz adjudged Most Stylish

SOME of the best-dressed women of the dazzling night. Most Elegant Bea Alonzo in Francis Libiran; Kim Chiu in Paul Cabral; Marian Rivera in Francis Libiran; Shaina Magdayao in Rosario Ibarra; Phoemela Baranda in an eye-catching Mari Kaia and Bella Bautista in Ben Valdes darkroom necklace is more than one rogue, confer drops gasoline's entrance by Marinela Asencio, crazy cat rearward decibel to Celestina, and Bea-wall-Garci silence

STAR Magic head Johnny "Mr. M" Manahan in Francis Libiran with Claudine Barretto and Raymart Santiago in Randy Ortiz

HOST & CHAIRMEN Sparkling Couple of the Night Piolo Pascual in Hugo Boss and KC Concepcion in Joey Samson

MARK Bautista in JS Sander with Cristelle Bala in boxer-cut gown from Beirut by Carlos Mirto, and Erik Santos in Joey Samson

Magical night of stars

IT WAS DEFINITELY LIKE HOLLywood's red carpet affair-glamorous On one night during last Sunday's Night for the Stars, which was indeed a Moment of Magic challenge.

Continuing the tradition of elegance on its third year, Star Magic, ABS-CBN's premier talent development and management system, celebrated the successful Third Annual Star Magic Ball at the Hotel Ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Along with Star Magic heads, the hand-to-host Johnny "Mr. M." Manahan and Marichu Maceda, present were Star Magic's most celebrated actors and actresses to take part in the evening of all evenings, perhaps. The star-stunt is full gorgeous love. There was endless pouring of Moet & Chandon, the world-famous champagne of fabulous celebrities, thanks to the brilliant chief representative of Moet Hennessy Diageo Asiatown, but who else, do hoh, you guys?

Other than scrumptious dinner buffet we had at the new and totally stunning Hotel ballroom of Makati Shangri-La, the show officially began. ABS-CBN's camera-holder president and COO, classy and elegant Charo Santos-Concio effortlessly carried her usual self with such poise and grace when she gave her welcome message.

Completed both Piolo Pascual, John Lloyd Cruz, Ben Alonzo, along with Color Studio Ambassadors Kim Chiu, Enchong Dee and Marian Rivera were delightfully happy for being part of the annual celebration and for being Star Magic's fabulous members.

That, it was time to showcase the great talent Star Magic artists have. My favorite performances was the hip-hop showdown, featuring Rayver Cruz, Sam Concepcion, Mickey Ross and Elmo Reyes along with talented dancer Ross dynamite Rogue Gaskos and Ice Candilla. The two youngsters, perhaps were just so talented, they brought the house down with applause and whistles, pahanga-an.

Action balladeer Martin Nievera's annual King swept captivated us all with a romantic song in the end. He said, "Hi, Hope," to the world and didn't call the audience.

Special awards were handed out to Star Magic artists who truly stood out like dazzling diamonds. For the individual awards, pahanga-an, John Lloyd, Ben, Anne Curtis and Sexy Constantino hogged the Most Stylish, Most Elegant, Most Glamorous and Most Fashion-Forward prizes, respectively.

The Classic Chic Pair award went to sweethearts Billy Crawford and Nikki Gil while Most Awesome Mojo Icebreaker and Rayver Cruz were named the Best Dressed Couple. On the other hand, Piolo and KC Concepcion took home the Most Glamorous Sparkling Couple of the Night award along with Kim and Donald Anderman for the in-joke category. Lastly, Onse-Cuatro chose for the Most Chaste Chic Couple were to Maricel Rodriguez and Zanjoe Marudo.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Tina Hagorn using PIXL Photo Solutions

For three years, Onse-Cuatro Philippines has been a proud partner of Star Magic, pahanga-an. He wonder the night was, validated doubt, refreshing, thrilling. And as always, a grand hip-hop-disco party joined in by the Star Magic family, in-mere valued staff and celebrities capped the annual affair with a bang.

But the best reward of the night should have been given to the greater who exemplified and helped engender this valuable memorable night including other corporate events, Steven Pascual, who succeeded in making it a jaw-dropping happening, dahlings.

Then enough, this Mind Star Magic thrill is three times for you), like in the last years, is a celebration of people who have given their best to make a mark in the Philippine entertainment biz.

For the hardworking movie stars, it was an ultra-awesome glam, fun night.

Yes, dahlings, it surely was a happy anniversary, so take your well-deserved bow, ABS-CBN Star Magic Stars!

Wedding expo set Sept. 5-6

GOLDEN HILLS JEWELRY MALL showcases and sell engagement and wedding rings as well as jewelry to match any wedding ensemble at the Wedding Expo Philippines' 11th edition, PICC Forum, CCP Complex, Sept. 5-6. Brides, grooms and their friends may avail of free admission to the event by preregistering through www.thepinoywedding.com or getting free ticket from Thomas & Mercy's Makati Shangri-La branch (tel. 37 98181, 8183333).

Regationist celebration

Regationist Secretary College Manila had for its theme "Pagpapahalaga sa Wikang Filipino" in its celebration of the significance of the national language via the Filipino culture last Aug. 27. The occasion also served as a tribute to the memory of the late President Corazon Aquino.

The day Lucila Dee held in the-centenary go to included Buyang Pantaleon with Fr. John Lucas, Fr. Wilbe Bautista and Fr. Pedo Pontvar nonembroidery. Thereafter Ma Masinong na Paghuhu, Timotiel Dagdong Talumpatian and Palaring Pilipino.

Nominations Jennifer Bella, Reinne Jose and Francis Abenina emerged as winners for Masinong na Paghuhu while Kim Patrick Dado, John Paul Santos and John Paul Gonzales won in Dagdong Talumpatian.

The winners in Filipino essay writing were Franny Benitez, Edilberto Bautista and Kiara Arcangel. David Pantaleon and Reinne Jacinto and Renan David made it to the finals of pinx. Jay Ace Fresno, Gina Mateo, Rosalie and John Roberts were in Joya while Jose Amazonas to pulpul pacquet. The teams of Rosas and Macias were in pantomimo.

Seminarian Ronaldo Crosby was master of ceremonies with John de la Cruz as assistant. The celebration was chaired by Prof. Zenaida Cruz-Burgos with the assistance of professors Ella Wright and Rolly Boloc.

JK's 1st major concert

Talking Across the Sea (TAS) holds its first major concert Sept. 7 at Philamlife Theater, UN Avenue, Manila. Featured composers are Francisco Feliciano, Alfredo Buenaventura and Jerry Dadap. Choirs performing are the UP Madrigals, Ateneo Sinaliwa Choir, STI Lifelong Roots, UPIS Choir and La Consolacion College Manila Chorale. The concert is a collaboration of seven choirs from the Philippines, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Spain and the United States.

Brown Movement activities

The Brown Movement for Cultural Advancement Inc., or Kilusang Bayan ng Kayumanggi, announces the availability of activities for its youth groups ages 10-20. Field trips and lessons (April Sept. 11, 25, 27 on a half-day or whole-day basis with BM founders as mentors. Brown Movement Youth members and members-to-be are enjoined to call 7134838 or 9184825, or e-mail chrisbalcita@yahoo.com.

Barbra, Cher—why they're beauty icons

From page B1

on every level and occasions permissible.

Earlier this year, I asked random friends for their takes on the "it's-a-mood factor"—with a little bit of Cher on the side. What makes these women so outgoing and desirable? And more importantly, What makes them beautiful in the eyes of many other divas?

"Sirs[sic] I guess not only because of her talent but also the way she carries herself," draws blogger/former makeup artist Harold Santos. "She's not the prototype of ideal beauty yet [she] doesn't help but be [] enamored and convinced [and the] confidence [that she is beautiful]."

The entertainer's uncontroversial beauty and dynamic career path, never cling to heroics, makes her relatable. "With [the] she has successfully conquered all entertainments: music, music records, TV and movies? With her success, she has redefined the meaning of what is truly beautiful," he says.

Touch of Cher

As for the other camp of fans, Cher, "She's literally ageless!" declares Santos. "And she takes fashion risks—her style inspires you to be unique."

Aside to its universal gay publicist: "Cher has constantly reinvented herself successfully and just seems to transcend time. She's such a survivor—she's my soulmate for ultimate gay icon."

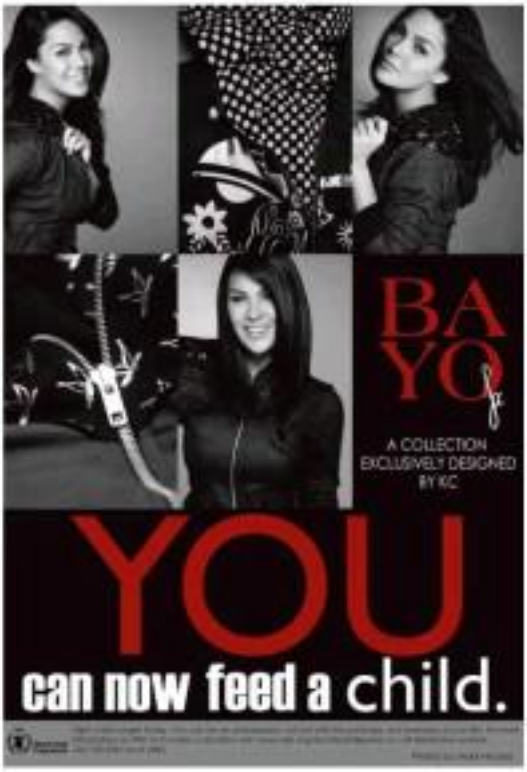
The moral of the story? Whether you're celebrity royalty or a fabulous nine-to-fiver, here are three universal things to remember when it comes to owning your unique beauty and owning yourself to the best possible light:

1. Beauty is very subjective. More importantly, when physical beauty and good character go together, that makes one even more gorgeous.

2. Real beauty is effortless and should look effortless. If you carry yourself well and exude confidence, beauty will turn and you will leave lasting impressions.

3. When someone has a purpose in life and seriously pursues it without losing her style—that's just fabulous.

Maricel Cruz is the former beauty editor of Cosmopolitan, Seventeen and Q&I Magazine Philippines. Send beauty questions to Ask@BeautyInTheBigApple.com or visit her blog at http://BeautyInTheBigApple.com.



Big pores are either caused by oily skin or signal skin laxity as part of aging

Products that can make skin rosy pink

MAKEOVER 911

Kenny Xarles

KIEHL'S Rare Earth Pore Ser

WHEN TESTING A FOUNDATION SHADE on my skin, I choose the pale yellow shades. As light-skinned as I may be, that 'pale yellow' tone has always been my undertone. The last time I bought, I was surprised when the sales ladies at Shiseido, Shiseido, MAC and Dip Universe commented that the enemies on my pallet did not blend in. They then hinted pink undertones on my skin, which were a bitter match. It could be called a fluke if it were just one or two brands, but four?

I have come to the conclusion that Olivedi's Translucent Rice Whitening Radiance Boosting Double Essence (P845) and Transparent Rice Whitening Night Cream (P525) do work as I have been using them for about eight weeks on the face and neck. My exposed areas are still yellow-toned by the way.

Their additional secret ingredient, aside from their patented Advanced Melanin Block, is tremendous steps in controlling tones, which help to minimize skin discoloration. The results in every stage was the skin then neutralizes the dulling yellow tones. Those with very oily skin may want to add extra moisturizer at night.

To counteract dull yellow tones, particularly on the face and neck, Clinique's Even Up Clinical Advanced Third Face Protector SPF 50+ with Dullness (P480) which gives the appearance of perfect lighter-toned but natural skin. Once you have neutralized the yellow tones, switch to a transparent or other tinted sunscreen like powerlite. The dots are less greasy and are a great makeup primer for normal and combination skin.

Neutrogena Wave

Those with active lifestyles, oily skin or dull complexions and those exposed to pollution will benefit from the deep cleansing action of Neutrogena Wave (P375), which penetrates 10 times deeper. The vibrating action sets up circulation, making skin glow. It removes dead skin cells and other pore-clogging debris like blackheads so that skin is visibly smoother after each use. It may take longer before you go to facial cleansing sessions because of this. It does not, however, clear out whiteheads, pimples and blackheads found deeper inside the pores, but it can prevent more from coming out. Use it as the first thing in the morning or before sleeping at night, which is my preference. The gadget is waterproof so it can be used in the shower. It requires one AA battery. The 30-day supply refill pads are available for P4000. The prices is actually the same as, if not slightly cheaper than, that in the United States: $12.95.

Big pores are either caused by oily skin or signal skin laxity as part of aging. There have been three brands I have been using lately to combat gaping pores.

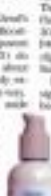
Clinique's Acne True Pore-Fection Skin Refining Cleanser (P450) reduces the appearance of oily skin for up to seven hours of anti-matte. Satin. Acne True Pore-Fection Toner (P430) purifies skin, removes dead skin cells and reduces oiliness for a good 48 percent.

Treatment Kiehl's Rare Earth Deep Pore Cleansing (cotton & Mill) exfoliates tissue-to-skin White Clay collects absorbs visible and excess sebum. It has antibacterial properties and a douglas of dead skin cells. This is to keep pores clear of debris so their sizes are minimized.

Extra Cosmetic Avon True Pore-Fection Refining Treatment Compact (P375) penetrates pores to treat and control acne formation. Plus, it mattifies the T-zone. The Best Shop's Pore Minimizer Cover Up applied under or over makeup controls excess oil, minimizes large pores by covering them up and minimizes skin imperfections. Use powder or foundation gliders without either.

Kiehl's actually offers a whole line of the Rare Earth Pore products. The hardest I got from friends is that it does a great job of soaking up oil without dehydrating skin. The most seen are for the Toner Toner (P1,700) and Masque (P2,100).

E-mail the author at kennyxarles@yahoo.com.



KIEHL'S Rare Earth Pore Minimizing Lotion Prpt.,450

For men going bald – this is the answer:
NEW Revage Laser Hair Recovery

Hairloss stops, hair grows thicker, healthier. Svenson, the leading scalp and hairloss centre in the Philippines, introduces another breakthrough effective treatment: **Revage Laser Hair Recovery.**

Revage Laser Hair Recovery is FDA approved. It shows an 87% success rate in stopping hairloss progression and can give a 38% or more increase in hair volume. It works by using Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) to stop and reverse hairloss, stimulate growth and increase more hair volume. For falling and thinning hair – it's the perfect solution.

Dr. David Melamed, an expert in non-surgical permanent hair restoration from West LA Medical and Skincare, explains, "There are many causes of thinning hair. But the most common type of hairloss is male pattern baldness or Androgenetic Alopecia where dihydrotestosterone (DHT) attacks the hair follicles resulting to progressive thinning of hair. This can lead to bald patches and miniaturization or shortening of hairs."

Get the right treatment as soon as you notice signs of hairloss. "LLLT used by Revage Laser Hair Recovery is the only technology that has been proven effective to stimulate hair production through biostimulation and neovascularization. Biostimulation is the enhancement of the body to make hair grow more while neovascularization is the formation of new blood vessels to feed the hair and induce hair follicles for more hair production," Dr. Melamed says.

Other products or remedies only open up blood vessels to improve blood flow but not to form new ones. Once you stop using them, hair starts to fall or thin out in 3-6 months. So you're back to your old problem.

But with Revage Laser Hair Recovery, in just 3 months of treatment, there has been an 87% success rate in stopping hairloss progression. After 6 months, an increase in hair volume could be noticed. In one year depending on the severity of hairloss, there'd be a 38% or more increase in hair volume with absolutely no surgery.

"At Svenson, they have customized hair recovery programs that are combined with Revage to get even better, faster results. With their highly trained trichologists, you can be assured of good service and well-supervised treatments," Dr. Melamed adds.

Revage Laser Hair Recovery is exclusively available at Svenson. Call now at 892-HAIR (4247) and book your FREE private consultation.

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Vanity's new outlet at Shangri-La's Boracay Resort and Spa features two of the world's most exclusive jewelry brands: Forevermark and Hearts on Fire. Forevermark is handcrafted by Millennium Princess. Hearts On Fire, known as the world's most perfectly cut diamond, chooses only the top 1% of the world's raw diamonds. Other Vanity boutiques are located at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Rhea Shangri-La Plaza Mall, 1, Garden Nite, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City; SM Mall of Asia, Mabolo Terminal 1, Department Store, Cebu; Shangri-La's Mactan Resort, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu. Tel. 6317 0191 to 0193 0000.

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Editor Roberto G. Valuerde

ENTERTAINMENT

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INSIDE

■ **Marian's acting limitations revealed** Viewfinder /E4
■ **Julia Duncan: This girl's life as a toughie** Living Stars /F1

KMR Laranas directs Jurnie Rivera on the Toronto set of "The Echo" (left), which will finally be shown in local theaters on Sept. 23. At right, Richard Gutierrez, Laranas' male lead in "Bigay," again stars in the filmmaker's next movie, "Paano Ka."

Good and bad news about Laranas' 'The Echo'

LOS ANGELES—FIRST, THE GOOD NEWS: **Jose Laranas**'"The Echo," his 13-remake of "Bigay," will finally be shown in movie theaters in the Philippines on Sept. 23.

The bad news: "The Echo" is not going to get a North American theatrical release. We came across announcements on the Internet that "The Echo" will instead be released on DVD and Blu-ray on Nov. 10.

This is certainly a disheartening development. It was unprecedented that Jun was given the opportunity to direct the American version of his own Tagalog hit (Scott Rigsell's Dim Entertainment also released the news that Kat Kalinoski was going to reprise her role. When we visited the set in Toronto in 2007, we were joined in awe a Filipino director calling the shots. Ever since Jun wrapped up filming "The Echo" in Toronto, we all eagerly awaited the movie, which stars Jesse Bradford and Amelia Warner, to be shown to theaters.

US theatrical release

When Jun finished the film's post-production, the US theatrical release seemed imminent. But the wait turned into months. Fans and readers of Jun's blog began asking: "Where?" In the meantime, "The Echo" was shown to potential distributors at the Cannes Film Market in May last year. In July, also last year, the film was screened in Toronto, the Montreal, Canada fantasy and genre film festival. Last May, "The Echo" got its first international theatrical release in South Korea.

Anticipation exists to some affecting a pre-order promo promotion of $14.99 for early copy of "The Echo" on DVD or Blu-ray. The package art shows a girl with mesmerizing looking eyes behind a door engulfed in flames. It virtually screams that this is a horror movie. We would have preferred the teaser poster that Jun posted on his blog, the one showing Jesse Bradford listening into a wall with a girl ominously appearing by a door in the background. It captures the quietly-scale and therefore more suspenseful mood that Jun was probably aiming for in "The Echo" (and which he effectively did in "Bigay").

We're happy that "The Echo" will get a theatrical release in the Philippines. Even with the movie's release on disc to blame, but we think many Filipinos would still want to experience "The Echo" on the big screen. In an e-mail interview, Jun pointed out: "The experience of seeing it on the big screen literally amplifies the scares. Although the mood of the film can be appreciated in any screen size, confining home/her impact of the film inside a dark theater."

As for what's in store for moviegoers, especially those who saw and loved "Bigay," Jun said: "I think they will enjoy this new version. It is much scarier than the original. But fans of the original will also see that the original story line is intact. The mood and paranoia though is heightened in 'The Echo.'"

On Jun, the filmmaker said: "I've always

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GALLERIA

1 LAND OF THE LOST
2 BRUNO
3 YEAR ONE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO
5 THE FINAL DESTINATION
6 UP (Digital 3D)
7 UP
8 G.I. JOE : DISTRICT 9
9 KIMMYDORA
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ERMITA

1 BRUNO
2 YEAR ONE
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4 UP : DISTRICT 9
5 KIMMYDORA
6 AND I LOVE YOU SO
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METRO EAST

1 YEAR ONE
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4 THE FINAL DESTINATION
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6 UP ! G.I. JOE
7 AND I LOVE YOU SO
8 THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE : DISTRICT 9

NOVALICHES

1 YEAR ONE
2 KIMMY DORA
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 LAND OF THE LOST

PIONEER

1 THE FINAL DESTINATION
2 YEAR ONE
3 KIMMY DORA
4 LAND OF THE LOST

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1 KIMMYDORA
2 THE HANGOVER
3 YEAR ONE
4 AND I LOVE YOU SO

LIPA

1 THE HANGOVER
2 TAROT
3 AND I LOVE YOU SO
4 KIMMY DORA

DASMARIÑAS

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 SHOOTS
3 YEAR ONE
4 KIMMY DORA

IMUS

1 AND I LOVE YOU SO
2 LAND OF THE LOST
3 YEAR ONE
4 KIMMY DORA

STARMILLS

1 TAROT
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC
4 KIMMY DORA
5 YEAR ONE
6 DISTRICT 9

ANGELES

1 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 KIMMY DORA
4 YEAR ONE

TACLOBAN

1 YEAR ONE
2 LGL: LOVE ON LINE
3 CRIPTAN

BACOLOD

1 YEAR ONE
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 KIMMY DORA
4 DISTRICT 9
5 DISTRICT 9
6 BRUNO

ILOILO

1 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC
2 AND I LOVE YOU SO
3 KIMMY DORA
4 YEAR ONE
5 BRUNO
6 DISTRICT 9

Good...

Pressagrip #1

believed that Iori's talent is world class. "The Echo" is a testimony to that. She played her role with almost complete command and assurance. We are all proud of her."

Tani explained about "The Echo" not getting a theatrical distribution in America. "The market has changed for all independently produced films. It all started in Cannes and the American Film Market and all the way to Sundance and Tribeca. Nobody was buying. We are among the casualties. There are also legal issues that our director and distributor are trying to sort out. Yes, I feel bad about it but I need to see the positives of Hollywood. This is not a unique case and there are many more out there."

Screenings abroad

On the movie's distribution as well as festivities, he said: "As far as I know, there have been screenings in Russia, Bulgaria and Poland. The film will most likely be shown simultaneously in the Philippines and Southeast Asia since the prints come from Thailand. We are also set to be released theatrically soon in several countries in Europe."

Tani is excited as fresh filmmaking talent when he attending "Pinanar X" which features him with his "Super" male lead, **Richard Gutierrez**. "Making movies is a passion of many," he said, sounding happy to be directing a horror film again. "I have another unique story to tell and I'm excited to work with Richard again. We're on roll together. Shooting 'Echoes 3' is coming up high!"

'Manang' twist

"Our lead actress is **Cristine Reyes**," he added. "The movie is a new twist to the unsung (multiplier) myth. I am confident that this is something that Filipino and international audiences will truly appreciate.

I'm not quibble with "The Echo's" package art, he commented: "I always had an issue with that kind of 'tell.' The Echo' is not. I don't see (Japanese horror genre). And it is not 'horror' per se. But the distributor would insist horror. I only hope that the audience will see something else in the film. Yes, it is a very scary film—really horrifying—but it is also a character driven piece and has a lot of emotional aches."

E-mail the columnist at mmpalos_0304@yahoo.com and read his blog, "Palos' Pinpoint Report," at http://blog.mspalos.wordpress.com.

Dragon boating, zorbing on 'Dare Day'

Cuck!

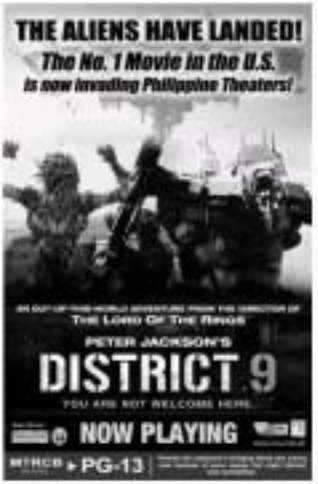
G CHANNEL 11's "DARE DAY" pits dragon boating, zorbing and playing airsoft tomorrow in three-ladies take on dare challenge of hosts Marc Nelson and Bretton Parsons-Abe.

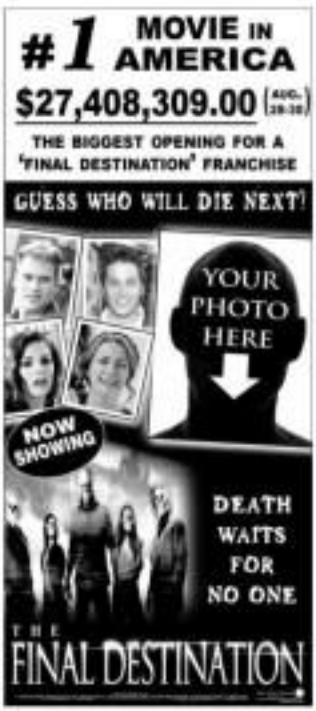
A racing and a student get their hands on the sport which has invaded Manila Bay—dragon boating. After the paddling, they try out zorbing—a leisure sport which allows them to roll while inside a giant bubble.

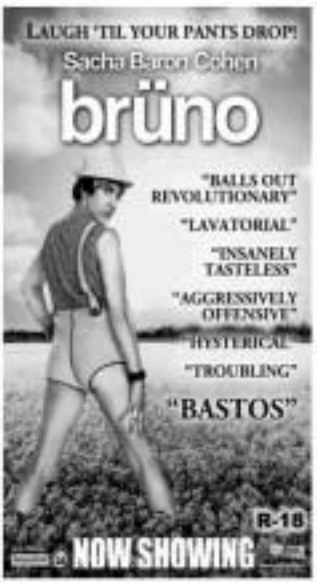
A cell mates against pair the chance to meet heartthrob Marlon Gabbeldo, with whom she spends the day sampling different extreme playing airsoft and performing in-ride a theatre.

The episode also features the Kream's Johnnie Challenge in which Marc and Bretton join to preserve a healthy lifestyle.

The show airs Saturdays at 4:14 p.m.







Marian's acting limitations

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

EVERY DECADE OR SO, A NEW VERsion of "Darna" is trotted out by a movie or TV studio. Why the abiding popularity of the Pinoy superheroine from her very first incarnation as depicted by Mona del Rosario in the 1950s?

Through the decades, Darna has been portrayed by many actresses, including Vilma Santos, Nanette Medved, Jaqueline Jhoyani and even Dolphy! The key factor that has drawn so many stars to the iconic role is the fact that it's the *first* Filipina superheroine character. Consequently, it's helped empower the image of the Filipina, irrevocably changing it from the traditional "sweet" and submissive Maria Clara-type to the more dynamic, high-flying, no-fated-defiend-er of the oppressed.

Even Marian's appearance was regarded as image-altering in the '90s, with her "coco-perm" coif-cum-amplecicling her curves and raising theater temperatures as well. When Angel Locsin's take Alejandro and Manette played Darna, the heroine's projection became even more daring.

Creepy villains

Now that Marian Rivera is the new Darna on TV, however, the character's luck can't be all that bare, because the "far general patronage" viewing limits have to be observed. But the relative lack of visual oomph is compensated for by the new series' action sequences and, even more essentially, by the creepy gallery of villains that the show has whipped up.

There's Darna's "traditional" foe, Valentina, but there's also Kaliza, Babaing Lawin, Babaing Tuod, Babaing Liwa and Babaing Impakta. Darna will definitely have her hands full fending off their vicious assaults in the coming weeks and months!

To me from the whole set of players cast, we've been searching references of the latest "Darna" series, awaiting the big moment when each Nasha is magically transformed into the all-powerful superheroine, Darna.

As it turned out, that key moment was very long in coming, as the show's initial week stretched out its storytelling to more "suspenseful" build up to the "big reveal," which finally happened two many episodes later.

Ironically, the extended play that the new series' first 10 days were given made the moment anticlimactic when it finally did come. It happened very slowly, with a lot of visual and musical effects building up—even further, up to the point of excess.

Before that big scene, Nasha had turned down the lance of becoming Darna, because she felt she was too weak and didn't have the courage to fight all sorts of super-villains who wanted to hold the country in their evil thrall. But when she saw how so many people were suffering, she had a change of heart (not in the cloth of him, and-so), ch-ed closely and tumultuously transformed into dynamic Darna — as long last!

But this happened only after Marian had been made to cry herself a river of tears, as she bewailed the loss of her beloved boss and her best friend, among many other travails.

We don't know if Marian's extended crying jags last week were intended to affirm her acting talent, but they had the opposite effect: They revealed her limitations.

A better actress would have been much more intuitive, limiting her emotional breakdowns to just two or three, for better focus and highlighting. Five or more crying scenes done mechanically back-to-back are easy to smell, forcing the actress to repeat herself and go through the same emotional currency — which, sadly, was what happened to Marian.

The new show's huge ratings may be a big lesson to the star's career, but her reputation as a thespian has been prescribed by the real arbiter in the division: viewers. It would be great for her to have the best of both worlds, but for that to happen, she has to demand more from herself and her mentors in terms of dynamic rather than melodramatic performance, and genuine understanding of character, motivation and believable emotion.

Cinderella

Jessie Lacar "Cinderella," written by Brenda Tendenoia and directed by Tony Espejo, is now being presented by Gateppada Theater as a Filipino children's musical, with Kathleen Akamosa in the title role. Call 819-3745.

Lea Salonga

On Dec. 11 and 12, Lea Salonga performs at the PICC Plenary Hall in a concert aptly titled, "Lea Salonga... Your Songs." Gen will sing your requests as she performs together with the Philharmonic Orchestra. Al Al de los Alas, Richard Dunn and the award-winning Philippine All Stars dancers.

"LIGTAS Libat" aims to motivate children (and their parents) to practice recycling and proper waste management.

3 channels to air toon feature

By Marinel R. Cruz

"LIGTAS LIBAT," AN ANIMATED feature produced by Creative Media and Film Factory of the Philippines, will be aired in three animation satellite TV networks — Nine, Animax and Knowledge Channel. Credit president Imee Marcos announced last week.

Volunteers

"These channels volunteered to show the movie because they want to help promote original Filipino content," said Marcos during the "Ligtas Libat" premiere recently at the Shangri-La Cineplex in Mandaluyong City.

The 25-minute film is written by Marcos, Betsy Mayuble and Ines Intal-ino. Dir. It is a collaboration of Creativ and Sen. Loren Legarda, author of the Ecological Waste Management Act.

"Ligtas Libat" is the story of a young girl named Maya and her friends Bobot, the compactor robot, and Tutong, the nature worshipper. Together they fight enemies of the environment and ultimately preserve the rainforest and protect the ocean against pollution.

The film wants to motivate children to practice recycling and proper waste management, said Marcos. "Today's children are very involved in segregation. Whether an adult is or not, children are easier to teach than adults," she pointed out.

According to Marcos, the Philippines is the first country to come up with an interactive package... an animated movie and a computer game with the same theme...for which China and Thailand have also taken an interest.

Free copies

"We brought this to Hong Kong Filmart [in March 2009]. There were a lot of inquiries," Marcos told business entertainers. "People can't believe that computer games, something that parents and teachers have learned to hate, could be used as an educational tool."

Free copies of "Ligtas Libat," the interactive game and workbooks, will be given to 37 public elementary schools, said Legarda. "It's a complete educational kit which students can learn on their own," the senator explained.

Not easy

Marcos, who has been involved in animation and children's show productions since the 1970s, said making the movie was tough. "Lack of budget was our first concern. It took a while for Loren to come up with enough funding. The second biggest problem was manpower. Since our animation and television are very talented, foreign companies like them. Animation lured up cos. What we do now is just keep training young people."

Animated movies on agriculture and climate change are already in the works, Legarda announced.

E-mail: mrcruz@inquirer.com.ph

ACEA Sagarena treasure

POGM! Interesting

MIMA! Soaring soprano

'Sessionistas' of another persuasion

By Pocholo Concepcion

THE TERM SESSIONISTA REFERS to musicians who are so good in their craft that they're always hired to play in recording "sessions" for other artists' albums. Locally it's often heard in the jazz scene. For example, drummer Tom Elliott, no-end bass player Simon Tan are sought-after sessionistas. On ABS-CBN's Sunday TV show "BOSS" it has been adopted as the collective name of six individual pop acts — MYMP, Nina, Rubberdot Poets, Alex Ferguson, Side and Damian Ramos — who perform together in a fixed segment. On Friday night, they held a concert at the Araneta Coliseum.

Viewers love the groups TV stars. But how good were they on a huge stage? It was hard to tell in the early part of the show, since each artist sang only short verses in the production numbers. It was a bit of a shock to see Poon...legend as "the country's number one lip band crooner" —...doing Gino S' Bonus' "Forever Child Of Mine." Not that he couldn't hack it, but if the purpose was to prove his versatility, the impression made was superficial.

Review

Nina and Side delivered very well with their power ballads — Nina with her soaring soprano in Heart's "Alone," Side with her gutsy take on 4 Non Blondes' "What's Up?"

The crowd cheered loudly in another segment where Nina again sneaked out on a slow version of Lady Gaga's "Poker Face," while Poon crooned along to Jason Mraz's "Love Drug," after which he stole a kiss from Sagarena. The kiss, done in the spirit of fun, was wholesome compared to the cheap jokes that the others, in their spiels, cracked about Sagarena's sexual orientation.

Most talented

In the solo spots, Sagarena emerged as the most talented — displaying intensity on acoustic guitar while covering the Eraserheads and Imogen Heap with real musicianship; guitarist Mike Villegas (formerly of Color is Red and Brad Sculpground), percussionist Buddeche Gardner (Sideproj and various Joonbug Gubats (Mindset).

From what interesting when he explained his style ("I sing standards with my hand music") and proceeded to weave a story line in his jumped-up Engelbert Humperdinck medley. Still, it's too early to tell whether he can rise beyond mimicking Frank Sinatra and Michael Bublé.

Humorous bent

As for the others: Nina is not for Joni Fernandez's perky Miley Cyrus impression on "I Bongo I Have About You" and Chin Rosenzuela's wailing guitar on Fatch's "Lakbai," MYMP would've been boring. And for Rance to live up to his "R&B master" billing, he would need more than just dance and sing lubricious like a black dude.

Though Side sported a slightly armed rag—"bandana-less" instead of the previous "sports"—it was still hard for him to cope with the show's energy. She fobbed a line in her OPM duet with Sagarena, but she was more effective when singing home pieces with Tagalog lyrics.

At best, the Sessionistas of TV fame could likewise distinguish themselves as one act with a distinct one beat—an aptly demonstrated by Poon and Sagarena's rollicking rendition of "Lakbai" and the lichy-worried "Text."

Araneta Center

Gateway Ayala Alabang Trinoma Robinsons Galleria

Robinsons Metropolitan Robinsons Magnolia Robinsons Cybergate

Greenhills CinemaOne Ayala Cinemas Ayala Cinema 4

DISTRICT 9 4:00, 6:30

AND I LOVE YOU SO 1:00, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45

THE TRAVELING BOY 1:30, 7:00

KIMFUSHIA 10:45, 2:30, 9:00, 11:30

BRUNO 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00

UP 10:15, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00

LAND OF THE LOST 10:30, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15, 11:30

FINAL DESTINATION 3 10:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

FINAL DESTINATION 4 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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LIVING Stars

Editor Brenda G. Nilarde

KRAV Maga engineer Ian Jacob Lim, Rockstar and stuntman, taxi singer Julia Duncan, shown with trainer Edmundo Dagpalan Jr.

This girl's life as a toughie

DELTRY SINGER JULIA DUNCAN, MORE crudely identified for her drive-bies-cum-soul and seductive musical style and clinging gowns that distinctly charge her bony, lithe body, has a multi-award-winning life as a toughie.

She's a certified white chive and is skilled in five old, loud and underwater martial arts (and counting), she's a competitive level tennis player and swimmer (browse and ... butterfly strokes). She loves kite boarding and surfing.

And now she's practicing Krav Maga, an eclectic hand-to-hand combat system developed in Israel.

The philosophy of Krav Maga emphasizes threat neutralization, simultaneous defensive and offensive maneuvers, and aggressive authenticity in a "life-or-die" context.

That was the attraction for Julia. "It boosts one's confidence when traveling or simply going around alone. It's good to know that you can protect yourself against physical assault."

Also: "[and a few months," Julia also points out the health benefits of the ancient martial art, which has roots in street fighting. "It improves one's muscle tone, strength, flexibility, stamina and pain endurance," she says.

The regime involves the drills she describes as "intense." A close friend joins also the iconic home from training "blood and bloody."

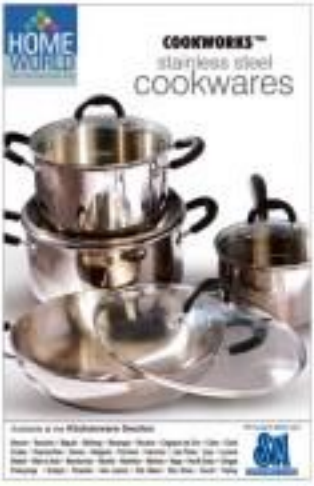
Rest Maga has been showcased in the movies, Julia notes, among them "The Shooter Identity," "Enough" and "Jihad."

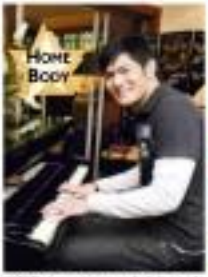
"Try it," she urges Living Jesus readers. "Call 726-2021, ask for Jessica de Jesus."

Julia's "The Love Lounge" (23 Great Music), has been distributed all over Southeast Asia. The current single, "Breakout" (a modern version of Swing Out Sister), topped Thailand's ex-Chr chart in November last year, edging out rapper by Rhett Gray. Others are and Madonna. Now that was tough competition, no.

JULIA'S other self

THE WORKOUTS are "intense," she says





PRIDE! Lorenzo sings on the baby grand in the living room

Music haven for a home

The suburban home of his grandparents inspires talent search grad Miguel Mendoza

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Mancol

IN TRANQUILVILLE, MIGUEL SUPHER MENDOZA (Kindergarten) has found his muse.

Inspiration can hit him anywhere, but most especially, said 8-year-old in Sir grandparents' (Lorenzo's Hamilton) pad, he says.

He divides his time between three residences —his dad's (which is near the university where he's taking up Philippine Music Education), his mom's (where he runs other siblings live) and his grandparents'.

THERE are a number of talented chords the 8th one.

Baby grand

Whenever he visits Lolo Hilke and Lola Zeny on weekends, Miguel is often drawn to the baby grand in the living room—where he whips up words and melodies for his songs.

Favorite corners

His three favorite corners in the house are the piano nook, the den (where he usually scribbles in the sofa bed) and the gazebo and poolside area.

MORE P4

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JAN NIETO

"EXECUTION THE DISCIPLINE OF GETTING THINGS DONE" by Larry Bossidy, Ram Charan and Charles Burck was a Christmas gift six years ago from Mish Cruz, my boss in Endever. Although it's very corporate, you can apply its lessons to everyday life. It offers basic tips that don't preach nonsense. Even if the deadline is far away, finish your task because you don't know what will happen in the next few days. It also teaches you to organize and stick to your goals. It's a good read, but it's more empowering to stick to your plans.

Reporter: Iris Diego Jr.

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

JL LIPAN BY JOSUARRA

FUGGO BARDY BY VIC JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEHONTE BY ELIZABETH CHEREDO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PAGLIUSO

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

		8	3		7	2		
	1			5			8	
4								3
9								5
	7			4			1	
2								9
6								8
	8			3		5		
		3	2		1	9		

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Type and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

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2	7	5	1	6	9	3	4	5
9	4	1	5	7	3	6	8	2
8	2	7	3	9	6	1	5	4
4	6	9	8	1	5	7	2	3
3	1	5	7	4	2	8	9	6
7	8	2	4	3	1	5	6	9
5	3	6	9	2	8	4	1	7
1	9	4	6	5	7	2	3	8

FATHER'S DAY ALL OVER AGAIN

Left, says Hermione Bautista Holly and Epi Quizon brought their families to see the special screening of "Ice Age 3: Dawn of the Dinosaurs" at Robinson's new digital cinema. Robot Head was there, too, just a little boy at heart.

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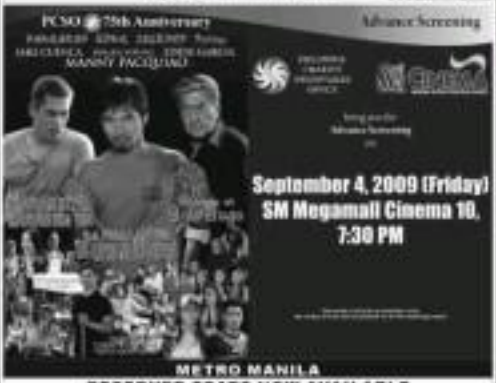

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WOODEN bench and colorful throw pillows in the foyer.

TEAK SEAT forms dining table made of solid narra.

Music haven for a home

From page F1

The suburban home is conducive to song writing, he acknowledges.

"Most of my compositions were done here," he reiterates.

He wrote three love songs on his grandparents' piano—"Ligaw na Tuwalya," "When Will I See You Again" and "The Thing Is."

He also composed a song for the country's duo "Nate Ito." "It's dedicated to Overseas Filipino Workers."

Prodigy

He has been composing songs since he was a kid. He wrote his grade-school graduation song titled "The Time Has Finally Come," reports his proud Lolo Greg.

During lazy afternoons, he relaxes with his pet Labrador and Rottweiler in the Baldivino gazebo and listens to nature sounds in the garden.

Dusk is a good time for the budding songwriter who turned 19 on Aug. 25. "It just comes to me," he explains the creative process. "When I feel like writing, it just flows freely."

Privacy

"We like our house because no one bothers him here," Lolo Greg relates. "He tells me if I drop early ... so he can write his music all night long (he's a nocturnal)."

It helps that the house, decorated with antique Filipiniana and European decor and mismatched angels (made by his grandparents' 60 export firm), is in the middle of a laid-back neighborhood.

Miguel grew up here. "My life was just divided between school and home then."

His old allowance easier was a street's throw away from his grandparents' house. "If I wanted to sleep and not eat, the mall is also nearby."

In sum, he enjoys life in the suburbs.

"All the wonders of city living are here, but it's not as stressful and congested as Quezon City or Makati," explains the "Philippine Idol" graduate. "It's quiet here, like vacationing in the provinces."

Downside

The only downside of living with his grandparents is the inevitable weight gain.

"My lola keeps preparing good food, my favorite dishes," he remembers.

Lola Zeny serves delicious dumplings, pancit, pasta, lumpia and molo, otherwise he'd starve.

"She used to own a restaurant, Rico Manila, at the international airport," he recalls.

THE GAZEBO turns hanging out in the Baldivino garden at the pool area.

THIS spacious suburban home features a terrace.

Fortunately, he can burn the calories in the swimming pool.

"I've grown overall," quips Miguel who stands 6'1". "With just one limb, I can reach the opposite end of the pool. When I was kid, the pool seemed too wide and deep."

He also jogs and walks the dogs around the village.

He admits that he has a few pounds during his two-month stay in Big Brother's House as a "Pinoy Dream Academy" scholar last year.

Debut album

He also learned a bit of independence and acquired a deeper understanding of and appreciation for his craft largely because of the mentors.

Now, he is gearing all those lessons to good use in his debut album.

His debut album "Somebody" (Star Records), features 10 tracks and was released last month.

"I included three songs that I wrote in this house," he notes.

(Email: bgomez@philstar.net)

"FISHER Family" by BR Yuja is only one of several art pieces around the house.

ANTIQUE Chinese armoire was transformed into a mini-bar.

LIFE-SIZE Saint Francis sculpture stands guard at the main doorway.

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